

## President's Corner

### MEMO

by Marcia Balestri

**DATE:** June 8, 2008  
**TO:** Wayne Bell, Soon-to-be  
President, MOS  
**FROM:** Marcia Balestri, Soon-to-be  
Past President  
**SUBJECT:** Loose ends

I am handing the wooden gavel over to you at the next Board Meeting, and just wanted to make sure you were up to date on some ongoing projects. The conference this year was a big success and I hope the one in Frederick in 2009 will be just as much fun. Janet Shields has everything under control and is also working on 2010, so I don't think you will have anything to worry about there.

Maureen Harvey has left the Conservation Committee in good shape. While we don't have her replacement lined up yet, her committee is still on the lookout for issues within the state and across the US.

Russ Kovach is ramping up the Development/Publicity Committee and working on a brochure that explains all the ways that people can donate to MOS. Russ has got some other great ideas for his committee that he will be discussing with you.

*(President's Corner continues on page 2)*

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# The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

MAY/JUNE 2008

VOL. 28, NO. 3

## HARFORD, HERE WE COME!

**When:** May 30-June 1

**Where:** Edgewood, Harford County

**Why:** Birds, Fun, Birds, Election, Birds

**How:** Contact Janet Shields,  
301-733-7877 or janetbill@prodigy.net

### Missed the registration deadline?

It's still not too late. We all know about such popular Harford locations as Susquehanna State Park and Conowingo Dam, but have you ever visited Aberdeen Proving Ground or Broad Creek or Fair Hill or Jerusalem Mill? How about Mariner Point Park, Palmer State Park, Perryman Peninsula, Rocks State Park, Upper Deer Creek Valley, Winters Run? Yet other field trips will focus on photography, dragonflies, butterflies, bird banding, and the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. Come along.

**Election of Officers** will take place at the annual business meeting, Saturday, May 31. The slate of candidates, as presented by Nominations Committee Chair Helen Patton:

President: Wayne Bell, Talbot

Vice President: Mark Johnson,  
Harford

Secretary: Janet Shields, Frederick

Treasurer: Emmalyn Holdridge,  
Howard

### And the winner is...

Gail Regester of the Kent Chapter wins the 2008 MOS Conference Pin Design Contest with a beautiful Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Congratulations, Gail, for creating such a wonderful design.

—John Malcolm

### Carpooling, Anyone?

Spurred by conservation concerns and rising gas prices, some MOS members have expressed an interest in carpooling to the conference. Chapter Presidents have agreed to keep a list of interested members and to put them in touch with one another; it will be up to individuals to then make their own arrangements. If you want to carpool, contact your Chapter President and give your address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

### CALL FOR POSTERS

Poster-format research presentations will again be in the spotlight during Saturday's Wine and Cheese Social, with researchers standing by to field questions about their work.

If your research involves the natural history of Maryland bird life (including banding activities and hawk watches), take advantage of this great opportunity to share your findings with the members of MOS. Contact Dave Ziolkowski (Chair, Research Committee) at 301-497-5753 or dziolkowski@usgs.gov.



## Rainforest Challenge

Help preserve the unique rainforests of the Cosanga Valley in Ecuador by taking up the challenge thrown down by George DuBois of Frederick Co. If MOS members contribute \$1,500 to this cause once again in 2008, George will donate a matching \$1,500. Send your check to MOS treasurer Emmalyn Holdridge, 5812 Harness Ct, Columbia, MD 21044.



### The Maryland Yellowthroat Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

Editor: Lydia Schindler  
lydiaschindler@verizon.net  
301-977-5252

Designer: Suzanne Probst  
msprobst2@verizon.net  
410-992-3489

Calendar Editor: Andy Martin  
apmartin2@comcast.net  
301-294-4805

Chapter Chatter: Jean Wheeler  
jswheeler44@msn.com

Proofreader: Ann Weeks  
annweeks@erols.com

Mailing list: Helen Horrocks  
hlh\_37@yahoo.com  
301-831-6315

MOS web site: <http://www.mdbirds.org>

Webmaster: Taylor McLean  
taylormcl@comcast.net

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by July 20, 2008 for the September/October 2008 issue.

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Photograph page 10 © Lynn Feryus.  
Photograph page 14 © George Jett.  
Photograph page 15 © David Brandes.  
Photograph page 23 © Kurt Schwarz.

### President's Corner (continued from page 1)

Martha Vaughn has done a great job with our investments over the years, and with her and the committee's expertise as well as some adjustments to our accounts we are running very efficiently. Even with the downturn in the market, we have a great revenue stream.

And speaking of efficiency, Phil Davis has the Records Committee running like a well-oiled machine, so all you need to do there is sit back and enjoy the erudite discussions and delicious refreshments at his annual meetings.

With Janet Millenson becoming the Communications czar, I think we will see some economies of scale in our publishing efforts over the next few years. So many things are in the pipeline—the Atlas, the Birding Trail, the updated Yellowbook, getting *Maryland Birdlife* caught up, and some other projects that are gleams in some folks' eyes—but I think Janet will have everything all lined up for you, so no worries there.

Of course, Lydia Schindler and her crew—Sue Probst, Andy Martin, Helen Horrocks, et al.—keep putting out the wonderful *Yellowthroat*, with its great columns and articles, like clockwork. The only thing to worry about there is to make sure you get that President's column in on time.

You won't get any midnight phone calls from Dave Ziolkowski and his Research Committee. It's a lot of work advertising our grants, reviewing projects, and encouraging participants to share their research with us, but you never hear any complaints from Dave and his committee about the hard work, just the joy and enthusiasm at award time.

Same thing with Tom Strikwerda and his Scholarship Committee. The number of teachers and other qualified applicants that have benefited from this great idea is incredible! Wow! Just think of all the students that these folks have in turn influenced through the years! And no midnight phone calls here either.

As you know, Brent Byers and the Sanctuary Committee have added property to better secure Irish Grove and have been working with Mid-Atlantic Builders to increase our holdings by 80 acres in Prince George's County. Of course, preserving habitat is one of our stated goals and this committee, I'm sure, will continue to work toward that aim.

Mike Bowen and the Statewide Education folks are self-starters. They come up with great ideas and implement them to

perfection. You don't have to do much to motivate these guys, just stay out of their way and they get it done.

I don't have to tell you about the wonderful job that George Radcliffe has done organizing YMOS. You are more on top of that than I, so you know what a great impact this committee has had.

I already mentioned the ongoing Atlas and Birding Trail projects. Jane Coskren with Walter Ellison and Marcia Watson have both projects moving right along. They might need the occasional signature, but they also have things well in hand.

The Budget won't come around again until next year, but that's easy—Shiras and Emy do all the heavy lifting, and you just have to sit there and nod every now and then.

There are also a lot of other terrific folks out there doing some great things for MOS who seem to just pitch in without a lot of prodding. So it seems that MOS really runs itself just fine and being President is a piece of cake! Right?

So anyway, thanks for backing me up these past two years and good luck with the next two. If you need anything, call or e-mail me; I'll be around between travels.

\*\*\*\*\*

Seriously, Folks, it has been an honor to serve as MOS's president, and I would like to thank all the board members I have worked with these past two years. I had a terrific Executive Council, all of whom put up with a lot of questions (and other "stuff") from me. Especially Janet M., who fielded many phone calls the first six months. (What is this about? Why is this like that? Who ARE these people?) I also enjoyed getting out to the various chapters to meet some of you, and I hope to see you in the field some time soon.

I must say I was puzzled when Al Haury called me four years ago to ask me to be Janet's Vice President, since I certainly didn't have a long history with the club (only since 1994) and I felt that there were more qualified and knowledgeable people out there. But, as I told my husband when I finally decided to take the job, I felt that members of MOS had taught me a lot, and maybe it was time for me to try to give something back, even if it was only a little time. So I am pleased we got some good things accomplished these last two years and got some other projects started. MOS does terrific things for our community and I am privileged to be a part of it.



## The Conservation Connection

by Maureen F. Harvey



### Gas Compressor at South Mountain?

A West Virginia company wants to build an 11-acre gas compressor station at the base of South Mountain, just west of Middleton in Frederick County. Kathryn Ruud from Citizens for the Preservation of Middletown Valley has contacted MOS to request that chapters and individuals consider asking state and local government officials to oppose this project. The site lies within the Rural Legacy Zone that runs from Brunswick to Myersville, and the project would require a change of land use from agricultural/residential to industrial. "As you know," she wrote, "hawks and other raptors love the updrafts along the mountain, and we have many other birds attracted to the forests and open fields here.... There is even a Saw-whet Owl labeling station [Lambsknoll] at the top of the ridge above this proposed site." Other concerns include emissions affecting air and water quality as well as light and noise pollution. The structure alone will be huge. More info is available online at [www.CPMV.org](http://www.CPMV.org).

It is up to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to approve or disapprove the proposal. Unfortunately, the public comment period was short, with little advance notice, and it has passed. Now the focus is on contacting all relevant public officials in Maryland, listed below, in opposition to this project.

- Senator Barbara A. Mikulski ([senator@mikulsi.senate.gov](mailto:senator@mikulsi.senate.gov))
- Senator Benjamin L. Cardin ([senator@cardin.senate.gov](mailto:senator@cardin.senate.gov))
- Representative Roscoe Bartlett  
([http://bartlett.house.gov/Email\\_Roscoe/](http://bartlett.house.gov/Email_Roscoe/))
- Governor Martin O'Malley ([governor@gov.state.md.us](mailto:governor@gov.state.md.us))
- Lieutenant Governor Anthony G. Brown  
([ltgovernor@gov.state.md.us](mailto:ltgovernor@gov.state.md.us))
- Delegate Joseph R. Bartlett  
([joseph.bartlett@house.state.md.us](mailto:joseph.bartlett@house.state.md.us))
- Delegate Paul S. Stull ([paul.stull@house.state.md.us](mailto:paul.stull@house.state.md.us))
- Senator David R. Brinkley  
([david.brinkley@senate.state.md.us](mailto:david.brinkley@senate.state.md.us))

#### Frederick County Board of County Commissioners:

- The Honorable Jan Gardner ([jgardner@fredco-md.net](mailto:jgardner@fredco-md.net))
- The Honorable David Gray ([dgray@fredco-md.net](mailto:dgray@fredco-md.net))
- The Honorable Kai Hagen ([khagen@fredco-md.net](mailto:khagen@fredco-md.net))
- The Honorable Charles Jenkins ([chjenkins@fredco-md.net](mailto:chjenkins@fredco-md.net))
- The Honorable John Thompson ([lthompson@fredco-md.net](mailto:lthompson@fredco-md.net))

Please e-mail Kathryn Ruud ([kathrynruud@yahoo.com](mailto:kathrynruud@yahoo.com)) to let her know what you've done.

### Elsewhere in MD

**Wind Plants.** MOS stood up with many other organizations and concerned citizens to say "No!" to the question, "Should wind plants be permitted on state lands?" MD

Department of Natural Resources Secretary John Griffin invited public comments during hearings in Garrett County and Annapolis in January 2008. Like myself and the Baltimore Bird Club's Conservation Committee members, the overwhelming majority of speakers were opposed to using state lands for commercial wind enterprises.

**Charles County Cross-county Connector.** MOS signed on to a letter initiated by the Mattawoman Watershed Society requesting a full-study Environmental Impact Statement for the planned extension of the Charles County connector. Doesn't it always make sense to follow the EPA requirements for large construction projects? Yet proponents of the extension are trying to avoid this requirement.

**That Warm Feeling.** The Global Warming Solutions Act currently under consideration in the MD General Assembly mandates reductions in global warming impacts (e.g., CO<sub>2</sub> emissions) but doesn't actually offer "solutions." This author perceives it to be a "feel-good" bit of legalese to make Governor O'Malley look like an environmentalist and give political impetus to wind power advocates, who are seeking to build on private and public land in Western MD.

### National Issues

**Bird Collisions.** The American Bird Conservancy has launched a Bird Collisions Campaign, hiring a full-time staff member, Karen Cotton ([kcotton@abcbirds.org](mailto:kcotton@abcbirds.org)), to focus on bird collisions issues, particularly building strikes. Several big cities are participating in Lights Out! programs that darken big buildings at night during migration periods. Birds cannot tell the difference between a reflected image and actual sky. Also, birds are attracted to lighted structures during nighttime flights, especially during foggy conditions, and they fly around and around in confusion until exhausted. The Baltimore-Washington area would be a great place for this program. What's needed is a leader to get it started!

**Threats in the West.** George Alderson has prepared several letters this winter and spring on behalf of the Howard County Bird Club, commenting on proposed changes in the use of Federal lands in several western states, which potentially threaten wildlife. These include opening more land for off-road vehicles and permitting mining prior to conducting feasibility or environmental impact studies. George also prepared comments for MOS to submit protesting changes to the Colorado Roadless Area Rule that have been proposed by the US Forest Service; such changes would weaken the protections conveyed by the National Roadless Area Conservation Rule adopted in January 2001.

**Delaware Bird-A-Thon.** MOS Conservation Committee followed the lead of the Howard Bird Club by contributing to the Delmarva Ornithological Society's Bird-A-Thon. See Kurt Schwarz's article on page 23 and consider supporting this worthy effort to help the Red Knot survive!

## MINUTES OF THE MOS BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 8, 2007

**President:** *not present*

**Vice-President:** Wayne Bell

**Treasurer:** Emmalyn Holdridge

**Secretary:** Janet Shields

**Past President:** Janet Millenson

**Atlas:** Jane Coskren

**Birding Trail:** Marcia Watson—

*not present; written report*

**Budget:** Shiras Guion

**Conference:** Janet Shields

**Conservation:** Maureen Harvey

**Development/Publicity:** Russ Kovach

**Investments:** Martha Waugh

**Sanctuary:** Brent Byers—

*not present; written report*

**Yellowthroat:** Lydia Schindler

**Youth Programs:** George Radcliffe

**Allegheny:** *not represented*

**Anne Arundel:** Linda Baker

**Baltimore:** *not represented*

**Caroline:** Danny Poet

**Carroll:** Maureen Harvey

**Cecil:** *not represented*

**Frederick:** Janet Shields

**Harford:** Thomas Congersky,

Russ Kovach

**Howard:** Mary-Jo Betts, Jane Coskren,

Karen Darcy, Shiras Guion, Kevin  
Heffernan, Martha Waugh

**Kent:** Walter Ellison, Nancy Martin

**Montgomery:** Mike Bowen, Don

Messersmith, Helen Patton,  
Lydia Schindler

**Patuxent:** Fred Fallon

**Talbot:** Cathy Cooper, Wayne Bell

**Tri-County:** Betty Pitney

**Washington:** *not represented*

Vice President Wayne Bell called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. He thanked the Talbot Bird Club for hosting the meeting at the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and thanked Blackwater NWR for letting us use their facility for our meeting. Wayne introduced Cathy Cooper, president of the Talbot Bird Club. Cathy gave an overview of the Talbot Club and its activities. Wayne noted that it's Christmas Count time and there are 30 scheduled this year. He noted that the count data is seeing increased usage and hopes everyone

will participate. Wayne thanked the people who make this organization work; this included all of the people here who volunteer so much of their time. It is really appreciated. There have been some successes lately. Talbot County people helped prevent a helicopter pad being developed next to an MOS sanctuary. It was MOS, Les Roslund, and the Talbot Bird club that turned this issue around and defeated it. Private landowners have been very cooperative when asked to let us conduct bird counts or look for a bird on their property. We are very indebted to these landowners.

**Minutes** of the previous meeting were approved.

**Treasurer's Report:** Emmalyn Holdridge's quarterly Treasurer's Report was submitted.

### CHAPTER REPORTS

**Caroline:** Danny Poet reported that the Denton Development Corporation, a non-profit community development enterprise committed to redevelopment in the Denton Central Business District, asked the Caroline County Bird Club to assist them with a nature trail project, which is part of their very exciting Crouse Park Wharves at Choptank Crossing project, <http://dentondevelopmentcorp.com/CrouseParkRedevelopment.html>.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Youth Programs:** George Radcliffe has run into a gigantic road block in the form of state testing. Parts of Maryland are particularly rigid in their interpretation of "No Child Left Behind," and the emphasis on testing has severely curtailed teachers' ability to link their lessons to nature—or bird-related subjects. For YMOS, George emphasizes that programs need to capitalize on youngsters' interest in nature in general; kids are not interested—even bored by—merely identifying birds. George would like to see each bird club develop a specific youth activity such

as the Raptor Day that YMOS sponsored last year, since the kids won't want to go on traditional bird walks. Last year MOS sponsored World Series of Birding teams at both the middle school and high school levels. Right now George is looking for a high school student to fill out the 2008 team; if you have a candidate contact George by late January. He would also like to network kids throughout the state, and he would like to develop a statewide summer program, probably in 2009. Also, he told of a group that puts together backpacks with binoculars and field guides, etc, and gives them to schools to loan to students; George would like to consider doing this in 2009. The Board discussed various suggestions, including the possibility of MOS giving state and/or county scholarships, and also the possibility of holding an education forum at the MOS conference to discuss these issues. Wayne Bell will bring the scholarship suggestions before the Executive Council and come back to the Board with a recommendation. Janet Shields will explore having an education forum at the conference. **Sanctuary:** Wayne Bell presented Brent Byers's report. For Carey Run: There have been 36 guests staying a total of 17 nights. The income for the use totaled \$408. The spraying for invasive Autumn Olive was done in October. The bill for \$10,400 has been paid to Ecosystem Recovery Institute. We are waiting for the 75% reimbursement from the state. DNR has requested a special workday for Carey Run on June 6-8, 2008, to pull out re-sprouts of Autumn Olive. Dave Brinker's Boy Scout troop from Catonsville will be coming to help. DNR will ask students from Frostburg University to serve as group leaders. Brent has given the Scouts permission to camp on the property. DNR will enlist volunteers from MOS to help lead field teams and lead nature hikes. They would also like to enlist MOS volunteers to assist with the actual work.



This workday will be followed up by another spraying in the fall. At Irish Grove the work weekend turned out to be the wettest of the year. Outside work was limited due to the weather, but some trail work was completed. The tide gate—designed to allow water to drain out while prohibiting salt water from flowing in—has been installed and some fill has been added to support the sides of the gate. The next step is to clear out vegetation in the channel to allow the water to flow.

It has been reported that Somerset County is considering discontinuing maintenance of the public boat ramp at the end of Rumbly Point Road. MOS should consider having the MOS president write to the Somerset County Commissioners and Roads Department reminding them that the Irish Grove property is a wildlife sanctuary and conveying our concerns about the impact of discontinuing the maintenance.

Brent received an e-mail from Mid-Atlantic Builders in late October stating that their attorney was working on the property transfer for the new MOS sanctuary.

**Atlas:** Jane Coskren again thanked the county atlas coordinators for their work. The Atlas Committee would still appreciate any donations of money from the chapters. Walter Ellison has finished cleansing the data base and is working on writing. Walter Ellison attended a meeting in early October where atlas coordinators from throughout the Northeast discussed how to use atlases as a monitoring program. It was found that atlas programs tend to drive state heritage program lists of endangered and threatened species lists. They also drive planning decisions, usually at the county or state level. Walter and the committee are formatting the maps. Walter has also been reviewing the data; there are 109,934 records.

**MD Birding Trail:** Wayne Bell presented Marcia Watson's report. The Maryland Birding Trail Task Force met in September and agreed on basic points for development of the Birding Trail. They developed a draft goals statement for the Trail and got a

sense of the overall scope of the project. They are currently investigating the feasibility and advisability of working with a professional consultant, who would assist with Trail development. They are also in contact with birders in Delaware who worked on the Delaware Birding Trail, which had its official opening today. By the time of the March Board meeting, they hope to have developed a timeline and action plan.

**Budget:** Shiras Guion needs budget requests for 2008-2009 sent to her by the first week in January.

**Conference:** Janet Shields reported that the 2008 conference is on schedule. The field trip sites are selected. The Harford County Executive, David Craig, or his representative will be coming to the Friday night dinner to welcome us. The registration brochure will be in the mail the end of January or early February. The 2010 conference will take place at Washington College in Chestertown on June 11-13. Janet hopes to have a site selected for 2009 within the month. There will not be an Artists Exhibit.

**Conservation:** Maureen Harvey reported on a major subject of concern: wind power. There is a lot of pressure to accept wind power. Chan Robbins would like MOS to have a written policy on the subject. The New York Audubon Society has one; Maureen has a copy of their statement, but feels it doesn't really do much or have enough in it to give guidance to legislatures. Energy is an extremely complex issue, and Maureen feels it will take time for MOS to formulate a policy. If not wind power, then what? Unfortunately the answer is coal, which is much more destructive to the land than having to clear property to accommodate wind power. Currently, developers propose using MD public lands for the wind power projects; the governor needs to hear from people on this issue. Please ask your chapters and chapter members to write letters to the governor protesting wind power projects on public land. Maureen will send e-mail addresses for web sites addressing this

issue to the MOS list server. The issue is energy policy overall, not just wind power, and any MOS policy should address energy policy in general.

Wayne Bell agreed that we need a broader statement on energy policy, and he will discuss the issue with President Balestri. He will explore forming an ad hoc group to study this issue and draft a preliminary MOS energy policy for the board to consider.

Janet Millenson attended an American Bird Conservation Alliance meeting recently. The main topic was Birds, Energy, and the Changing Forest. Janet found the talk about climate change, lead poisoning, rising sea levels, invasive pests, water shortages, etc., to be incredibly depressing. Still, there were a couple of small bright spots. Some good things are happening with building guidelines. With regard to condors in Arizona and California being poisoned by lead ammunition, Gov. Schwarzenegger, even though he was pessimistic, did sign a bill to ban lead ammunition in certain areas of California. This led to a discussion on how to affect public opinion; hunters have pulled together to act against a common constraint, and birders need to follow the hunters' example and find ways to act together in a common causes.

Wayne Bell announced that Maureen will be leaving as chair of the Conservation Committee at the end of the MOS year. Marcia Balestri will be looking for a new Conservation chair.

**Development/Publicity:** Russ Kovach would like to see an increased use of our MOS emblem, incorporating it in the birding trail signs, maps, etc. He would also like the chapters to include the state emblem in their newsletters. He feels it should be MOS policy for MOS publications to carry the emblem. The more familiar our symbol becomes to people, underscoring the breadth of MOS activities, the more likely they are to respond to our fund-raising efforts. With regard to publicity issues, Russ talked about two local radio programs where the stations went to

*(Board Minutes continue on page 6)*

**BOARD MINUTES** (continued from page 5)

Chesapeake Audubon rather than MOS for spokespersons on birding. Russ would like to compile a list of contacts for specific bird-related topics and mail it each year to every state media outlet, with an emphasis on local media. Russ proposes making certain people available for interviews and letting it be known that we are an organization to go to for information on bird conservation. Having a media presence would considerably help in doing this. We also need to inform the public about scheduled MOS activities. The Executive Council will discuss the dissemination of a media speakers list and development of a consistent logo at their meeting in February.

**Investments:** Martha Waugh handed out her latest Investment Committee Report and noted that our income is up.

**Yellowthroat:** Lydia Schindler reported that the January/February issue is currently in design.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Manual of Operations:** Wayne Bell noted that two of the Manual of Operations issues came up at today's meeting. The Manual still needs descriptions for the Development Committee and for Youth Programs. Paul Zucker has volunteered to compose the descriptions of these committees if the chairs will send him the points they wanted included.

**Nominating Committee:** Helen Patton announced that they have a new member to fill the committee vacancy and represent the Eastern Shore area of Maryland. Susanna Scallion of the Talbot Club has agreed to serve.

**George DuBois's New Challenge:** Emmalyn Holdridge, Treasurer, reported that donations are up to \$830. She noted that the \$1,500 needs to be donated by December 31.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Financial Assistance to Board Meeting**  
**Host Chapters:** The Executive Council

would like to broaden the number of chapters hosting our quarterly board meetings. To help do that and also because of the increase in food costs, the Council decided, with no questions asked, to give a host chapter a check for \$50. They can use this \$50 for meeting-related expenses, scholarships, or anything else. If there are costs associated with renting the meeting facility, the Council will decide how that should be reimbursed in addition to the \$50. No receipts are needed for this amount.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

Vice President Wayne Bell adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by  
—Janet Shields, Secretary

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## YELLOWTHROATS GO FOR THE GLORY—AND THE ATLAS

The MOS Yellowthroats are heading back to Cape May to participate in the **World Series of Birding** on May 10. This 24-hour birding event in New Jersey raises money for conservation projects, and we'd like to thank everyone for supporting us the past three years and helping raise money for the Breeding Bird Atlas project.

As you may know, participants can compete in a number of categories, including statewide, Cape May County, Big Sit, and even digiscoping. Last year, the Yellowthroats took first place in the Cape May County competition for the second year in a row, with 184 species! This year, Matt Hafner will be unable to join us, but we are pleased to announce that **Mikey Lutmerding** has joined the team in his place. Mikey has previously participated in the WSB as a member of the Allegheny Goldenwings.

The Yellowthroats will again be raising money for the completion of the Breeding Bird Atlas project, which MOS members have worked so hard on for over five years. If you, or someone you know, would like to make a pledge, please send an e-mail or letter with your name and pledge amount to Jim Brighton ([jdbrighton3@hotmail.com](mailto:jdbrighton3@hotmail.com)). Your support is greatly appreciated and makes us proud to represent the Maryland Ornithological Society at the World Series of Birding. (More information on the competition can be found at [www.birdcapemay.org/wsob.shtml](http://www.birdcapemay.org/wsob.shtml))

—The MOS Yellowthroats: Jim Brighton, Zach Baer,  
Bill Hubick, and Mikey Lutmerding

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### Maryland Yellowthroats Pledge Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: **Jim Brighton**  
**100 Prospect Ave.**  
**Easton, MD 21601**

# **MARYLAND/DC RECORDS COMMITTEE** **STATUS REPORT AS OF MARCH 20, 2008**

BY PHIL DAVIS, MD/DCRC SECRETARY

The MD/DCRC has reached the following record decisions since the last committee status report was published in *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. This report covers MD/DCRC review packages 113 through 115 and 118. MD/DCRC report numbers are in brackets. These records will be addressed in additional detail in a future issue of *Maryland Birdlife*. No new species for MD or DC were included in these decisions.

More information on the MD/DCRC can be found on the committee's web pages at the following URL:  
<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcsrc/index.html>

## **MD RECORDS ACCEPTED:**

**Wood Stork**, *Mycteria americana* [MD/1999-069]  
 Prince George's County  
 28-Jul-1851

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, *Dendrocygna autumnalis* [MD/2006-042]

Gaithersburg, Montgomery County  
 04-Jun-2006 through 01-Jul-2006

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, *Dendrocygna autumnalis* [MD/2007-070]  
 Glen Burnie, Anne Arundel County  
 25-Jun-2007

**"Common" Teal**, *Anas crecca crecca* [MD/2006-059]  
 Pickering Creek Audubon Center, Talbot County  
 29-Mar-2006

**"Common" Teal**, *Anas crecca crecca* [MD/2007-041]  
 Pennyfield Lock, Montgomery County  
 12-Mar-2007 through 15-Mar-2007

**Mississippi Kite**, *Ictinia mississippiensis* [MD/1998-022]  
 Aquasco, Prince George's County  
 02-May-1998

**Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-097]  
 Tilghman Island, Talbot County  
 02-Sep-2006

**Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-104]  
 Lake Needwood, Montgomery County  
 02-Sep-2006

**Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-098]  
 Scientists Cliffs, Calvert County  
 02-Sep-2006

**Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-092]  
 Violette's Lock, Montgomery County  
 02-Sep-2006

**Thick-billed Murre**, *Uria lomvia* [MD/2007-038]  
 Ocean City, Worcester County  
 17-Feb-2007 through 03-Mar-2007

**Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto* [MD/2006-058]  
 Frederick, Frederick County  
 28-Jul-2006 through 09-Oct-2006

**Say's Phoebe**, *Sayornis saya* [MD/2007-093]  
 Poolesville, Montgomery County  
 02-Sep-2007 through 03-Sep-2007

**Mountain Bluebird**, *Sialia currucoides* [MD/2003-137]  
 Assateague Island National Seashore, Worcester County  
 08-Nov-2003

**Painted Bunting**, *Passerina ciris* [MD/2007-047]  
 Seabrook, Prince George's County  
 31-Mar-2007 through 06-Apr-2007

**Painted Bunting**, *Passerina ciris* [MD/2007-057]  
 Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County  
 20-Apr-2007

## **MD RECORDS ACCEPTED-GROUP:**

**Sooty/Bridled Tern complex**, *Onychoprion fuscatus/anaethae* [MD/2000-007]  
 Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Saint Mary's County  
 16-Sep-1999

## **MD RECORDS ID OK/?? ORIGIN:**

**Great Tit**, *Parus major* [MD/2006-057]  
 Dan's Mountain, Allegany County  
 11-Jun-2006

## **MD RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:**

**Whimbrel**, *Numenius phaeopus* [MD/1999-049]  
 Cranesville, Garrett County  
 26-May-1999

**Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2004-002]  
 Tolchester Beach, Kent County  
 19-Sep-2003

**Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto* [MD/2005-145]  
 Emmitsburg, Frederick County  
 01-Aug-2005

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, *Tyrannus forficatus* [MD/2003-184]  
 Snow Hill, north of, Worcester County  
 Jul-1984

## **DC RECORDS ACCEPTED:**

**Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [DC/2006-095]  
 Hains Point  
 02-Sep-2006

**Thick-billed Murre**, *Uria lomvia* [DC/1999-172]  
 Potomac River  
 22-Dec-1896

## **DC RECORDS ACCEPTED-GROUP:**

**Selasphorus, Broad-tailed/Rufous/Allen's, Selasphorus** complex [DC/2004-006]  
 National Arboretum  
 22-Dec-2003 through 26-Dec-2003

(Records Committee continues on page 8)



## RECORDS COMMITTEE (continued from page 7)

## DC RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:

Wilson's Storm-Petrel, *Oceanites oceanicus* [DC/2003-121]

Potomac River

19-Sep-2003

Kirtland's Warbler, *Dendroica kirtlandii* [DC/2003-031]

Bolling Air Force Base

30-Sep-1979

## NEW TO THE RECORDS COMMITTEE:

The MD/DC Records Committee held its annual meeting on March 8, 2006. Meeting minutes and updates to our web pages will be forthcoming. However, we would like to thank the three members who are rotating off the committee for their service. They are:

John Hubbell (DC)

George Jett (Charles County)

Ray Kiddy (Allegany County)

We would also like to welcome our three new members who are beginning their three-year terms:

Mike Bowen (Montgomery County)

Bill Hubick (Anne Arundel County)

Fred Shaffer (Anne Arundel County)

Continuing members include:

Stan Arnold (Anne Arundel County)

Tyler Bell (St. Mary's County)

Paul DeAnna (DC)

Ellen Lawler (Wicomico County)

Marcia Watson (Cecil County)

Leo Wiegant (Anne Arundel County)

—Paul O'Brien, Chair (Montgomery County)

—Phil Davis, Secretary (Anne Arundel County)

## Bugs In Print

The upcoming issue of *The Maryland Entomologist*, edited by Gene Scarpulla, will deal exclusively with the insects of Hart-Miller Island (HMI). It will carry six articles, four of them by MOS members.

Gene himself will contribute an annotated checklist of the island's insects. Richard Orr describes "A Rare Maryland Damselfly." Bill Hubick writes on the Giant Swallowtail, and Marcia Watson and Debby Terry document a first record of Palamedes Swallowtail.

Anyone who is interested in obtaining a copy of this issue when it becomes available (probably sometime early this summer), please e-mail gene at [ejscarp@comcast.net](mailto:ejscarp@comcast.net). There will be a small charge to help defray the cost of printing, since the Maryland Entomological Society budget is miniscule.

## 2008 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The MOS Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the selection of 13 scholarship recipients. They're a cross-section of science and environmental educators and volunteers from across Maryland who share their interest in nature with children and young people. The Committee and MOS congratulate them and hope they will find their summer experience rewarding and helpful as they interact with young people in the years ahead.

Eight of the scholarship recipients will attend the Field Ornithology workshop on Hog Island sponsored by the Maine Audubon Society. Of these, the four Helen Miller Scholarships were awarded to **Heather Burk**, an environmental education instructor for fifth graders at the Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Education Center, Charles County; **Anne Duffus**, an eighth-grade science teacher at Springfield Middle School in Williamsport, Washington County; **Lesley Gardiner**, volunteer coordinator for Friends of Patterson Park in Baltimore; and **Barbara Gianfrancesco**, a science teacher at Pyle Middle School in Montgomery County. A Doris Oakley Scholarship was awarded to **Laura Taylor**, an environmental education instructor working with fifth graders at the Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Education Center. **Richard Wood**, a science teacher at Wicomico High School in Salisbury, received the Daniel and Helen Gibson-Dorothy Mendinhall Scholarship. The Frances Covington/Etta Wedge Scholarship was awarded to **Callie Schwartz**, an education coordinator at the Patterson Park Audubon Center in Baltimore. **Joyce Browning**, a middle school teacher at Mountain Christian School in Joppa, Harford County, was awarded the John Wortman Memorial Scholarship.

Two scholarship recipients will attend the Workshop for Educators on Hog Island. **Janet Bogue**, a naturalist/teacher in the Environmental Education Program of the Audubon Naturalist Society, Chevy Chase, Montgomery County, won the Orville Crowder-Donald Messersmith Scholarship. **Jessica Gibson Moran**, a fourth-grade teacher at West Annapolis Elementary School, Anne Arundel County, received a Doris Oakley Scholarship.

The Maine Audubon workshop called Maine Island Discovery will host two MOS scholarship winners. **Lindsay Hollister**, a naturalist and volunteer coordinator at the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Anne Arundel County, received the Eleanor Robbins Scholarship; **Suzanne Kilby**, an outdoor educator at the Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, Millersville, Anne Arundel County, received a Doris Oakley Scholarship.

One scholarship recipient will travel to Minnesota to attend the Boundary Waters workshop offered by the Audubon Center of the North Woods. **Eric Greenlee**, a sixth-grade science and math teacher at Lindale Middle School in Anne Arundel County, was awarded the Chandler Robbins Scholarship.

—Tom Strikwerda  
Chair, Scholarship Committee



## Updating the Lists, 2007

After several fantastic years, 2007 was, as Mark Hoffman so ably put it, “a year of reversion to the mean.” Best birds were probably the **Thick-billed Murre** at Ocean City in February and the **Say’s Phoebe** in Montgomery County in September. There were lots of great “catch-up” birds this year, though: **Cave Swallow**, **Long-eared Owl**, **Bicknell’s Thrush**, **Calliope Hummingbird**, **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, **Band-rumped Storm-Petrel**, and **Arctic Tern**, to name only a few.

In the **Maryland Life List**, we’re STILL waiting to launch the 400 Club. Paul O’Brien (Montgomery) added two new species this year to move to 399. Close behind him, at 397 species each, are Mark Hoffman (Carroll) and Jim Stasz (Calvert). Virginian Paul Pisano continues to hold down the fourth spot on the list, at 385.

Top tally for **MD Year Birds** belonged to Jim Stasz, with 328 species, followed by Kevin Graff (Baltimore) with 305 and newcomer Mikey Lutmerding (Allegany) with 303. Next were Jim Brighton (Talbot) with 296 species, Dave Powell (Montgomery) with 292, and Bill Hubick (Anne Arundel) with 290.

The coveted “Maryland 300 Club” added seven new folks this year and includes 94 of our current reporters. The “All-Time 300 Club,” the list of folks who have ever reported a total of over 300 species in Maryland, now stands at 120 members, made up of Maryland’s past and present top birders. Those reporting the most new birds added to their state list this year include Carol McCollough (Talbot) with 10 species and Joy Bowen (Montgomery) Derek Richardson (Prince George’s), and Fred Shaffer (Anne Arundel), all adding 8 new species.

Rob Hilton (Montgomery) continues to hold down the top spot on the **District of Columbia Life List**, with 270 species, followed by Paul Pisano with 265, Gail Mackiernan (Montgomery) with 248, and Barry Cooper (Montgomery) with 247. Highest counts for 2007 in DC were Gary Allport (DC) with 181, Paul Pisano with 179, and Greg Butcher (Montgomery) with 158 species.

In the **Maryland Yard List** category, the highest “Home” list is held by Philadelphian Harry Armistead, with 266 species from his weekend hangout in Talbot County, followed by Jim Stasz, who has 219 species at or from his Calvert County yard (which includes a large chunk of the Chesapeake Bay!). Leading the “Work/Other” category are Kyle Rambo (St. Mary’s) with 294 species on the grounds of the Patuxent Naval Air Station, Patty Craig (St. Mary’s) with 266 species on her second home, Point Lookout State Park, and by Dave Webb (Harford), with 224 species on Aberdeen Proving Grounds property. Highest 2007 count in the Maryland Home/Work/Other Yard list was Jeff Shenot (Prince George’s), with 188 species, followed by Harry Armistead, with 159 species.

In **DC**, new reporter Gary Allport leads the “Home” category with 90 species, while Norm Saunders has 88 species from 15 years of rambling through the parks of Capitol Hill to top the “Work/Other” list.

The popularity of the **Maryland Total Tick List** continues to grow, with 33 individuals now reporting their total tick: the sum of their sighting lists for all 23 counties. These folks had to have a total tick of at least 2,300, an average of 100 species per county; the purpose is to demonstrate a breadth of experience across the entire state of Maryland. Top lister is Jim Stasz, with a county average of 267 species and the only total tick in excess of 6,000, followed by Bob Ringler (Carroll), with an average of 234 species per county and Marshall Iliff (Anne Arundel, then California, then Massachusetts) with an average of 220 species. Top total tick honors for 2007 go once again to Bill Hubick, who averaged 132 species per county this, followed by John Hubbell, who averaged 125.

Jim Stasz’s specialty, the **Maryland All-County List**, also known as the **County Closeout List**, is led, of course, by Jim Stasz, who has seen 180 species in all 23 counties. He’s followed by Bob Ringler with 127 closeouts and John Hubbell with 120. Jim Green (Montgomery) reports an amazing 43 closeouts in 2007; Bill Hubick had 35.

George Jett (Charles) leads the **Birds Photographed in Maryland List**, with 370 species, followed closely by Jim Stasz with 360 species. Rapidly closing in is Bill Hubick, who has photographed 328 bird species in Maryland. In 2007, George Jett photographed a remarkable 193 species; Kurt Schwarz (Howard) captured 62 species.

I’m leaving the top county listers for you to discover on your own. Browse the county lists of listers to your heart’s content. You can find the full report at <http://www.mdbirds.org/birds/mdbirds/locality/listrep2007.pdf>.

—Norm Saunders  
MOS List Report Compiler

### KEEPING UP WITH MOS

The **MDbirds listserve** offers an easy way to stay current with MOS actions and activities—and communication about MOS business was one of the improvements most requested in a survey of members several years ago. The list serve carries alerts about conservation issues, requests from out-of-town birders, special opportunities for MOS members (like the special discount for the online *Birds of North America*). Sign up at <http://mailman.listserv.com/listmanager/listinfo/mdbirds>. If you find it not right for you, you can always unsubscribe—but I don’t think you will.

—Helen Horrocks



### ANNE ARUNDEL

Searching for her “Shangri-la of Florida birding spots,” Marilyn Taylor rented a condo in Titusville for the month of February. Only 10 minutes from 140,000-acre Merritt Island NWR, she was also close to the Orlando Wetlands, the Blue Heron Water Treatment Plant, and Viera Wetlands.

During her stay, Marilyn played host to several AABC birders, including Gladys Lambert (who tallied 130 species and six lifers) and John Taylor. They also birded with George Thomas, who has a winter home nearby, and Louise and Bill Miles. Members of the local bird club, the Space Coast Audubon Society, energetically banded together to show the Maryland birders many of the local specialties. Highlights included Purple Gallinule, Snail Kite, Whooping Crane, Painted Bunting, and a rare visitor, Black-chinned Hummingbird. With 150 species, Marilyn has found her Florida Shangri-La.

In November, Sharon and Tom Bradford traveled farther south—to Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego, and the High Andes. During their 3-week adventure with Wings/Sunbird Tours, they logged an incredible 384 species of birds. The tour began in the north-west corner of the country in the high Andes, reaching an altitude of 12,000 ft. Sharon asks, “Who wouldn’t enjoy seeing Andean Condors soaring overhead, Torrent Ducks and Rufous-throated Dippers swimming up a fast-moving stream, or being buzzed by a Lyre-tailed Nightjar?” In the Pampas, they saw Greater Rheas running amongst herds of cattle and Southern Screammers, appearing too heavy to sustain flight, actually flying. The vast

Magellanic Penguin colony at Punta Tombo was a must visit. At the spectacular Los Glaciers National Park and the Moreno Glacier (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) they added White-throated Treerunner, Black-chinned Siskin, Patagonian Sierra-Finch, and the delightful Thorn-tailed Rayadito. Their journey ended, fittingly, in Tierra del Fuego (the end of the world), where they saw the ultimate—male and female Magellanic Woodpeckers.

### HARFORD COUNTY

South was also the direction taken by Lynn Feryus. In February, Lynn traveled all the way south, to Antarctica, with Naturalist Journeys on a Peregrine Adventures ship. The 18-night trip covered the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island, the South Shetlands Islands, and the Antarctic Peninsula. The 12-person group saw seven species of penguin and five of albatross; they had the usual hit-or-miss luck with island endemics. Lynn tallied 67 life birds.

[I can vouch for Naturalist Journeys. I traveled to Mazatlan, Mexico and the Tufted Jay preserve with them in February. It was a well-organized trip with a small group of 8. I saw 206 of 213 species, among which were 31 life birds, including Tufted Jay, Blue Mockingbird, and Citreoline Trogon. —JW]

The March/April issue of *BirdWatchers Digest* carried an article about the Delmarva Birding Weekend, and mentioned three MOS members as guides: Harford County’s Tom Congersky and former Harford/now Tri-County members Jean and Larry Fry.



Lynn Feryus with her King Penguin buddies.

### HOWARD COUNTY

Here’s the news you’ve all been waiting for: The second edition of *Birding Howard County, Maryland*, by Joanne K. Solem, is now available online and online only. At present it includes individual species accounts, the Birding Year in Howard County, and a Howard County bird list, plus the first 20 or so site guides. Other site guides will be added gradually in the months to come. Go to <http://www.howardbirds.org> for this wonderful resource.

Kurt Schwarz celebrated his 50th birthday with his first international bird tour—a present from his wife, Patsy. The 9-day Otus Asia Tours trip to San Blas, Mexico, began with a morning of birding near Puerto Vallarta, then moved on to San Blas. The 10 participants enjoyed an all-day trip to the mountains near Tepic and two boat trips on the river. The trip total was 240 species, of which Kurt logged 230, including 104 lifers. He enjoyed outstanding views of western Mexican endemics such as Elegant Quail, Mexican Parrotlet, Black-throated Magpie-Jay, and San Blas Jay; his views of Laughing Falcon, Collared Forest-Falcon, Russet-crowned Macaw, and Flame-colored Tanager could not have been better. A huge American crocodile reminded folks to keep hands in the boat. Margaritas were reported to be exceptional.

Tom Miller made good use of a short trip to Tucson, Arizona. Over February 21, 22, and 23, he covered four major birding sites and picked up 24 life birds. At the world-renowned Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, he spotted Black-throated Sparrow, Verdin, and Curved-bill Thrasher. Sabino Canyon provided Abert’s Towhee, Gambel’s Quail, Mountain Chickadee, and Phainopepla. While birding the Buenos Aires NWR, Tom was able to link up with the Tucson Audubon group. Later he traveled to a higher elevation in Madera Canyon. Some of Tom’s favorite birds were Green Kingfisher, Vermillion Flycatcher, and Bridled Titmouse.

—Kate Tufts



Gayle and Bill Hill spent an enjoyable two weeks (Feb 20-March 5) on their first birding trip to Arizona. They spent several mornings roaming the famous Salome Highway near Buckeye looking for Le Conte's Thrashers; early on the third morning they found a pair foraging near a possible nest site. At other locations, they saw two Mexican vagrants, a Northern Jacana and a male Ruddy Ground-Dove.

They spent the remainder of the trip exploring the lower elevations of the Huachuca and Santa Rita mountains. Finding a Black-capped Gnatcatcher was the top priority. After four trips to three different locales, they finally found a pair in Montosa Canyon; fortunately, the gnatcatchers afforded excellent looks as they foraged low in trees directly above the happy observers. Elegant Trogon, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Crissal Thrasher, and Baird's, Black-chinned, and Rufous-winged Sparrows were among 45 lifers. The Hills are looking forward to a summer trip to SE Arizona sometime in the future.

#### MONTGOMERY

Lydia Schindler, too, spent February amidst the saguaros and craggy Santa Catalinas of southeastern Arizona, where she had the pleasure of birding with former MOSers Dick Homan, Arlene Ripley, and Erika Wilson (and indeed, with Tom Miller at Buenos Aires; see Howard Co, above). No lifers, but a wonderful reacquaintance with the likes of Prairie Falcon, Mountain Plover, Spotted Owl, Green Kingfisher, Williamson's Sapsucker, and Black-capped Gnatcatcher. Plus, relishing the improbably lovely song of the roadrunner.

#### TALBOT COUNTY

My wife Joyce and I spent the last two weeks of February on a first-ever vacation to the tropics in Belize. Rather than sign on to a guided tour, we elected to rent a car and travel on our own, staying wherever possible at budget locations and dining with the locals. We started in the north, staying at the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary, where Robert Crawford, a

superior birder, showed us nearly 40 new species, among them Rufous-tailed Hummingbird, Black-headed Trogon, Common Tody-Flycatcher, and Rufous-browed Peppershrike.

Armed with this introduction to unfamiliar birdsong, we were well prepared for our visits to habitats around such towns as Orange Walk, San Ignacio, Dangriga, and Sittee River. Much to Joyce's delight, we also enjoyed guided horseback rides into the karst landscape and experienced ancient Mayan ruins at Lamani, Xunantunich, and exquisite Actun Tunichil Muknal (Cave of the Stone Sepulchre: one enters only by swimming, wading in chest-deep water to reach the sacrificial chambers nearly two hours within). We even managed a day of snorkeling on the offshore reefs of the South Water Marine Reserve.

Our trip was enhanced by local, licensed guides who were deeply familiar with birds, native plants, and history. The guides were equally committed to saving the rich cultural heritage and environmental resources of their homeland. I added an even 100 new bird species to my neotropical list (including the requisite Jabiru, Keel-billed Toucan, and Collared Aracari) and saw just about every wintering warbler that breeds or passes through MD. But the best thing about the trip was the inspiration that Joyce and I

gained from the people themselves. We will share that together for years and years to come.

—Wayne Bell

#### HIGH-VOLTAGE MEMBERS FOR TRI-COUNTY

Tri-County has an exciting pair of new members. Carol and Ron Gutberlet are originally from Maryland (Ellicott City and Cockeysville), but they moved to Texas in 1991 for grad school. While in Texas, they became interested in birding (how could they help it?) and joined the Ft. Worth and then the Tyler Audubon Societies. Ron wound up as compiler for the Tyler CBC for the past several years. He also managed to put 500 Texas birds on his life list. His 2007 Big Day team—Will Russell, Peter Barnes, Stephan Lorenz, and himself—recorded the most species (209) in the Upper Coast Division of the Great Texas Birding Classic. In 2005 Ron (with Carol along for many of the trips) did a Lower 48 Big Year. He drove over 70,000 miles in his trusty Honda CRV and took several plane trips plus 9 pelagic trips to reach a grand total of 642 species! Now that Ron and Carol are back in Maryland, they are planning and plotting their county lists, "county closeout" birds, total ticks, annual lists, etc. Everyone be on the lookout for great competition and fun.

—Carol Broderick

### MAY COUNT 2008 • SATURDAY, MAY 10

The May Count this year will be held on Saturday, May 10. This will mark the 46th consecutive year that Maryland birders have conducted this survey of the bird populations in the state in the first half of May. By the second week in May, many of the species that nest in Maryland have returned to their breeding grounds, and they are temporarily joined by an array of warblers, vireos, and other migrating species whose numbers peak in the state around this time.

Because species diversity is at its highest point, plumages are the brightest, and bird songs fill the air, there is no better time to bird in Maryland. If you are willing to slap on some sunscreen and insect repellent, you will be rewarded with a great day of birding. More volunteers mean better coverage.

For those who are interested in participating for the first time, each County has an assigned

compiler who can provide you with maps of territories that need coverage and pair you up with experienced birders who will show you the ropes. You will discover new spots to bird that you didn't know existed. A list of County Compilers appears on page 13. A field checklist for species seen during May Count can be downloaded from the MOS web site at [www.mdbirds.org/counts/namc](http://www.mdbirds.org/counts/namc).

Due to their rural nature and smaller populations, counties on the Eastern Shore and in Western Maryland need additional assistance with May Count. Volunteers from the more populous parts of the state can explore new territories in these rural areas and will likely see species that they do not see in their home county.

Please join us in the field on May 10 for a great day of birding!

—Mike Welch, Statewide Coordinator



## REMEMBERING ELEANOR ROBBINS

Patuxent Bird Club members were saddened by the passing of Eleanor Robbins, founder of our chapter in 1961 and active member for the rest of her life. Married for 60 years to Maryland ornithologist Chan Robbins, she shared his life-long commitment to the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) of which he, in turn, was a co-founder.

Eleanor Cooley was born in Washington, DC, her father a plant pathologist, her mother a high school English teacher. Nurtured by these refined and educated parents, she became a respected naturalist in her own right, earning a degree in botany and studying ornithology at Cornell. Jobs in these fields being few, she also obtained a fall-back degree in library science. It was in this capacity she returned to the Washington area, and it was on a 1946 Audubon Naturalist Society field trip to the Patuxent Research Center led by Chan Robbins that the two met. She always referred to Chan, as most of us know him, as “Chandler.”

Eleanor lived a very active life: as sponsor of a local Junior Audubon Club, Cub Scout Den Mother, merit badge counselor, nature columnist for the *Laurel Leader*, and tireless letter writer on behalf conservation causes. As long-time

Conservation Chair in the Patuxent chapter of MOS, her exhortations to fellow members to write legislators on behalf of conservation issues national, state, and local were a regular part of every meeting.

Meantime she managed to raise four children, providing them with a wealth of outdoor experience and taking them along when Chan attended conferences around the world. The two also traveled extensively on their own. Eleanor joined Chan at nearly every MOS convention, including last year's in Salisbury shortly after her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday; though by then in declining health, she thoroughly enjoyed the long boat ride field trip.

Less well known were her (and Chan's) generosity. Two MOS scholarships, now named for each of them, were originally endowed without attribution. She also contributed to myriad conservation groups here and in Central America. Many local area birders owe their start to the encouragement, as youngsters, that Eleanor gave them. Hers was a full life well lived.

—Fred and Jane Fallon  
Patuxent Bird Club

## REMEMBERING PAUL DUMONT

Paul DuMont, who died in late January, was one of the best birders in the country. Noted for the lengthy list of North American bird species he had seen,\* Paul's more enduring legacy will be his work introducing thousands of area birders to the birds of our region. For almost 40 years, Paul organized the Audubon Naturalist Society's free birding trip program—recruiting leaders, encouraging exploration of new areas, coordinating publicity, and leading hundreds of trips himself. The almost 2,000 trips he organized over those years introduced hundreds of birders each year to not only the close-in areas such as Rock Creek Park or the C&O Canal, but also the more distant Mid-Atlantic hotspots such as Bombay Hook and Chincoteague NWRs, Cape May, NJ, and Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania.

With friend Bob Ake, Paul created the pelagic birding trips heading out of North Carolina for the Gulf Stream and established that those waters were rich in bird life. He meticulously organized sections of hundreds of Christmas Bird Counts over the course of many years. He would carefully pick through large flocks of blackbirds or shorebirds or waterfowl looking for the unusual individual that might be a rare species. His hearing was outstanding; the slightest sound put him on to a hidden bird. He was one of the last birders to see the Bachman's Warbler before its extinction.

Paul was especially noted for his work with beginning birders. Always generous, he would go to great lengths to help a struggling birder find a bird in dense foliage and then patiently explain all the reasons why it was that species and not something else. His knowledge of birds was deep and very well organized and he loved to share it.

Paul, of course, was also well known for his unique personality. He was generally somewhat ruffled, in later years with perhaps more than one pair of glasses perched on his flattop haircut and with pockets full of small notebooks and pens. A serious Redskins fan, he often worked Christmas Bird Counts with a small transistor radio plugged into one ear. It didn't slow him down. Veteran birders across the country have at least one good Paul story, stories retold with humor, perhaps a touch of incredulity, and always fondly.

—John Bjerke  
Montgomery Bird Club

\*Paul was one of the first members of the AOU's 700 Club, in the 1970s. He held the top list of birds seen in the Lower 48 from 1978 to 1985. He saw his 800th US life bird in 1996; his total life list was 829.

See additional remembrances of Paul DuMont in *The Chat*, the newsletter of the Montgomery Bird Club, available online at [www.mdikinc.com/mcclub](http://www.mdikinc.com/mcclub).

## MAY COUNT 2008 COUNTY COMPILERS

|                       |   |  |   |                             |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Allegany              | John Churchill  |  | 301-689-8344 (h)                          | jchurchi@atlanticbb.net     |
| Anne Arundel          | Dotty Mumford   | 1900 General's Hwy, Annapolis, MD 21401                  | 410-849-8336                              | dottymum@comcast.net        |
| Baltimore             | Joel Martin   |  | 410-744-9211                              | jcdlmartin@aol.com          |
| Calvert               | <i>No assigned compiler. Please contact: Michael Welch.</i> |  |   | manddwelch@comcast.net      |
| Caroline              | Debby Bennett   | P.O. Box 404, Denton, MD 21629                           | 410-479-2978                              | firefly5845@hotmail.com     |
| Carroll               | Bill Ellis  |  | 443-402-9033 (w)<br>or 443-402-9490 (fax) | ellisw@saic-abingdon.com    |
| Cecil                 | Parke John  | 57 Virginia Ave, Red Point Beach<br>North East, MD 21901 | 410-287-6037 or<br>410-506-3874           | pjohn@wlgore.com            |
| Charles               | George Jett   | 9505 Bland Street, Waldorf, MD 20603                     | 301-843-3524                              | gmjett@comcast.net          |
| Dorchester            | Harry Armistead   | 523 E. Durham Street<br>Philadelphia, PA 19119-1225      | 215-248-4120                              | harryarmistead@hotmail.com. |
| Frederick             | Michael Welch   | 8619 Burnt Hickory Circle<br>Frederick, MD 21704         | 301-874-5828                              | manddwelch@comcast.net      |
| Garrett               | Fran Pope   | 503 F Street, Mt. Lake, MD 21550                         | 301-334-4908                              | fpope@gcnetmail.net         |
| Harford               | Mark Johnson  | 3204 Bryson Ct, Baldwin, MD 21013                        | 410-692-5978                              | mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil  |
| Howard                | Kevin Hefferman   | 9775 Diversified Lane, Ellicott City, MD 21042           | 410-418-8731                              | KJHeff@aol.com              |
| Kent                  | Walter Ellison  | 23460 Clarissa Road<br>Chestertown, MD 21620             | 410-778-9568                              | rossgull@baybroadband.net   |
| Montgomery            | Andy Martin   | 3 Thorburn Road<br>Gaithersburg, MD 20878                | 301-294-4805                              | apmartin2@comcast.net       |
| Prince George's       | Fred Fallon   | 1700 Pomona Place, Bowie, MD 20716                       | 301-249-1518                              | fwfallon@earthlink.net.     |
| Queen Anne's          | Glenn Therres   | 207 Johnny Lane, Stevensville, MD 21666                  | 410-643-7422                              | gtherres@dnr.state.md.us    |
| St. Mary's            | Bob Boxwell   |  | 410-414-3311 or<br>410-610-5124           | bobboxwell@hotmail.com      |
| Somerset              | Charles Vaughn  | 1306 Frederick Avenue<br>Salisbury, MD 21801             | 410-742-7221                              | essc@comcast.net            |
| Talbot                | Les Coble   | 9317 High Banks, Easton, MD 21601                        | 410-820-6165                              | lescoble@friend.ly.net      |
| Washington            | Dave Weesner  | 6618 Zittlestown Road,<br>Middletown, MD 21769           | 301-432-7718                              | dweesner@dnr.state.md.us    |
| Wicomico              | Ellen Lawler  | 412 Monticello Avenue<br>Salisbury, MD 21801             | 410-546-9056                              | emlawler@salisbury.edu      |
| Worcester             | Mark Hoffman  | 7263 Norris Ave, Sykesville, MD 21784                    | 410-409-5777                              | wcbirding@adelphia.net      |
| District of Columbia  | <i>No assigned compiler. Please contact: Michael Welch.</i> |  |   | manddwelch@comcast.net      |
| Statewide Coordinator | Michael Welch   | 8619 Burnt Hickory Circle<br>Frederick, MD 21704         | 301-874-5828                              | manddwelch@comcast.net      |



## Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- In the midst of winter many birders start looking for unusual gulls. On Feb 16, Ron Gutberlet of Salisbury and birding friend Peter Barnes found a LITTLE GULL in the company of three BONAPARTE'S GULLS at the Ocean City Inlet; this non-breeding adult was feeding between the jetties. Two more LITTLE GULLS, both adults, were sighted on March 16 by Ed Boyd and Jim Stasz; they saw the birds from Lapidam in Harford County. Another winner in the LITTLE GULL search was Kye Jenkins; on March 17 he viewed one from Diamond Point Rd, feeding over the Back River in Baltimore County. This bird was relocated and photographed by George Jett on March 18, and Kevin Graff found the bird again March 19.
- On March 15 Sherman Suter found a BLACK-HEAD-ED GULL near Port Republic, Calvert County; Sherman was periodically scoping the Bay while taking a walk along the beach from the south end of Scientist's Cliffs to Governor's Run.
- Birders have come to expect wintering eider and Harlequin Ducks in Worcester Co, but this year both species showed up at Point Lookout SP in St Mary's County. A female KING EIDER was initially found by Matt Haffner on Dec 23 during the Point Lookout Christmas Bird Count, on the Chesapeake Bay side of the Point. For the next three weeks, through Jan 12, the King Eider provided many birders with sufficient excuse to make the drive south.
- On Jan 22 Point Lookout's HARLEQUIN DUCK proved a nice consolation prize for David Smith and Melody Nevins, who were trying for the King Eider. This beautiful adult male stayed in the area until at least March 4, to the joy of many birders.
- Small numbers of SANDHILL CRANES typically pass through this area on the way to their nesting grounds. This year there were two reports. On March 2 Mikey Lutmerding saw a lone bird at Mountain Lake in Garrett County; the crane stayed in the area until at least March 12. A second-hand report from Gene Scarpulla revealed that five SANDHILL CRANES had been seen and photographed March 2 by a canoeist who was exploring the wetlands at the mouth of the Gunpowder River near Joppatown, Harford County.
- Patience and sharp eyes are usually necessary in order to find unusual birds, especially true when searching through large winter flocks of blackbirds. But a little luck can also help. On Feb 27 Paul Bystrak of Salisbury found a nice flock of blackbirds just three houses away from his own. A quick return home to pick up binoculars paid off by providing a view of 14 BREWER'S BLACKBIRDS in the group (9 males and 5 females). BREWER'S BLACKBIRDS were also reported back in January; in the early hours of Jan 5, Jim Stasz observed two males as they flew out of a roost near Truitt's Landing in Worcester County.



California Gull (center) photographed by George Jett on January 23, 2008.

### Southern Maryland California Gull

On the afternoon of January 23 I stopped at the Charles Towne Center Shopping Center to see what gulls were lounging on the ice. With the cold weather we were having, part of the stormwater pond behind the movie theater had frozen, and good numbers of gulls were resting there. I had stopped perhaps a dozen times in the past two weeks and seen only Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls.

On that January afternoon the numbers of gulls had grown, so I stopped once again. Much to my surprise, I found an unusual gull that I could not identify at first. The above image shows the animal is intermediate in size between the Ring-billed and Herring Gull. My first instinct was a goofy Lesser Black-backed Gull (LBBG), since their numbers have increased in our region in the past decade.

Having a bit of experience with LBBG, I quickly dismissed this possibility. The shape of my "mystery gull" was wrong for LBBG. The bird of interest is in its second winter. The leg color and length, the bill shape, the head, and overall appearance told me this was not a LBBG. The light was good, so I took a number of images. When I got home, I took out my three gull field guides (you can't have too many field guides) and began to evaluate the images I took. Overall size, shape, color and length of the legs, bill pattern, and a number of other field marks told me I had just photographed a second-cycle California Gull, *Larus californicus*. California Gull, as the name implies, is a western bird, and there are only a handful of records of this species in Maryland.

Since California Gull has never been documented in Charles County before, and is a review species in Maryland, I wanted some corroboration from some of the gull experts I know. Yes, some people find the study of gulls interesting. They take their dates to landfills, sewage treatment plants, frozen ponds, and other places gulls hang out. They don't get many dates. Of the four people I consider gull experts that I can reach quickly, three responded immediately, and all agreed that the image was of a second-cycle California Gull.



I was keen to get others to see this rare bird, especially Gwen Brewer, my partner, but I had a problem. She was at work (I am retired), it was after 4 PM, and the sun was going to set soon. She and others could only hope the bird remained overnight. At dawn on January 24, she and I met Tom Feild and others at the frozen pond; unfortunately, the bird was not present. After many additional tries, I was unable to relocate this bird. Clearly this bird was in transit, as are many gulls that time of year.

On the next day, January 25, I found three LBBGs that had not been there on all my previous visits, but still no California Gull. The only advice I can give for finding rare birds like the California Gull is to be persistent. Learn the varied plumages, learn the habitat the birds frequents, go often (with or without a date), study large flocks carefully, and eventually you will get lucky. Gull watching can be frustrating due to complexities of the group, but can also be very exciting when you find something unusual. —George Jett

## Record Golden Eagle Flight, Dan's Rock

Dan's Rock on the Allegheny Front near Frostburg has long been known as a good spot to catch the fall Broad-winged Hawk flight. The discovery of early spring flights of Golden Eagles (GOEAs) in central Pennsylvania over the past 10 years got me thinking that similar flights likely occur in western Maryland. Because the Allegheny Front is a prominent topographic feature that stretches southward some 75 miles into West Virginia, it seemed to me that Dan's Rock should be a prime spot for spring GOEA migration, especially when winds are southeast and perpendicular to the Front.

Being on sabbatical this spring, I finally had a chance to test this idea. The forecast for March 3 looked good. Initially the day was very slow, but the wind shifted from south to southeast, and between 11:45 and 3:30, 35 GOEAs and 7 Bald Eagles flew by, many of them gliding past at close range (see photo). Almost all of the eagles were adult, as is the case for the early spring flight in Pennsylvania. This is a record single-day GOEA flight for Maryland, the previous record being the 23 that Ray Kiddy found in the fall at Town Hill on Nov 13, 2003.

I returned on March 13 in hopes of confirming that the March 3 results were not a fluke. Although the wind conditions were not quite as good, 12 GOEAs cruised past, as well as many Red-shoulders, Red-tails, and one dark morph Rough-legged Hawk.

Although counts from just two days are not a lot of data, these results strongly suggest that the Allegheny Front is a significant spring GOEA migration pathway through Maryland, particularly when warm southeast or east winds produce miles of updrafts along the Front.

—David Brandes  
Lafayette College, Easton, PA

## Observations from Ray Kiddy

It is unclear whether the high counts in the spring (in numbers higher than one-day fall counts) is a relatively recent

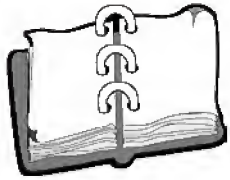


Golden Eagle photographed by David Brandes on March 3, 2008.

phenomenon or whether their passage in the spring was just not very well monitored until recently. It is also interesting that high counts in the fall seem to occur under the most difficult weather conditions (high winds, cold, often with snow, etc.) while those in the spring seem to occur on the mildest spring days with southerly winds. Whether there are fewer spring days with the right conditions than fall days with optimum conditions is unclear, as is whether the fall season is more protracted than is the spring migration. For example, the urge to get north to begin the breeding season may concentrate the movement into a shorter window while the need to move south in the fall is less urgent and thus spans a longer period. All very interesting.

## BOARD BULLETINS

- The **Maryland Birding Trail** Committee is developing a form that will let chapters, individuals, and organizations nominate their favorite birding sites, and let the committee evaluate the nominees in an even-handed way. The Committee is also exploring the possibility of grants from DNR, State Highways, Office of Tourism, and private foundations. The project is estimated to cost at least \$110,000.
- Russ Kovach, Chair of the Development/Publicity Committee, is working on a **brochure for potential donors** to MOS; he would welcome input from members who have experience in this area.
- Gayle Bach-Watson, MOS rep to the Environmental Fund for Maryland, is seeking the **names of the Human Resources officers** at members' workplaces; she'd like to set up meetings where she can make a pitch for EFM and MOS.
- Bob Ringler and Matt Hafner have finished revising the **Yellowbook** and sent the material to Norm Saunders, who will do the graphs. Meantime, **the previous edition has been reprinted** and copies are available from John Malcolm, smudgie@comcast.net.
- The Board gave the go-ahead to Marcia Balestri to try out an **MOS travel Program** with Tropical Birding, starting with two trips, one domestic and one international.
- Wayne Bell is looking for volunteers to help develop an **MOS policy on alternative energy**.
- **Vacancies:** Chair, Conservation Committee. Members: Budget and Scholarship Committees.



## MOS Calendar

### May-June 2008

#### Thursday, May 1

**MEETING. Frederick.** Our own *Bob Balestri* has become an accomplished nature photographer. Bob will share with us some of his best work and give us tips on how to take better pictures. 7 PM in the Community Rm, C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

#### Friday, May 2

**MEETING. Anne Arundel.** *Glen Therres*, MD DNR, will present "Maryland's Action Plan for Conserving Our Wildlife Diversity, from Barn Owls to King Rails." 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

**MEETING. Harford.** *David Brinker* presents "Maryland's Biodiversity: The Wonders of the Free State and How We Go About Biodiversity Conservation." No reservations necessary. 7 PM at the Harford Glen Outdoor Education Center near Abingdon. For add'l info, contact Russ Kovach at 410-457-4274.

**H Washington.** Sideling Hill Area. Meet 7 AM at the Rte 65 P&R for a trip to look for warblers and other spring arrivals. Leader: Dave Weesner, 301-217-2593.

#### Saturday, May 3

**H Anne Arundel.** Piney Orchard Nature Walk. Half day. Woods, fields, ponds, and refreshments. Meet 6:30 AM at Parole P&R, off Harry Truman Pkwy, between Riva Rd and DMV. Leader: Peter Hanan, 410-672-5672.

**H Baltimore.** Halethorpe Ponds. Diverse habitat of this little-birded area includes the river, two freshwater ponds, floodplain woods, and a powerline cut. We'll look for Warbling Vireo, both orioles, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Osprey, Bald

Eagle, pheasant, and an assortment of warblers. Meet 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R. Leader: Joel Martin, 410-744-9211 or jcdlmartin@aol.com.

**H Baltimore.** Soldiers Delight. Warblers, flycatchers, and tanagers are featured as spring migration heats up in this globally rare ecosystem. Meet 7:30 AM. From I-695 Exit 18 (Liberty Rd), go west 4 miles, then bear right onto Deer Park Rd just before traffic light and water tower. In approximately 1.5 miles, you will see the Visitor Center; continue another half mile to historical marker, overlook, and gravel lot on left. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6849 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

**H Baltimore.** Hampton National Historic Site. Meadow and woodland birds. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM at farmhouse parking lot. From Beltway I-695, take Exit 27/Dulaney Valley Rd north. Turn right at very first road, Hampton Ln (traffic light). Drive approximately one mile (past park sign), make a left turn onto farm lane, and proceed to the farmhouse parking lot (you will see the farmhouse at the end of the lane). Leader: Ben Poscover, 410-823-2548.

**H Cecil.** Elk Neck SF. Traverse the quiet wooded lanes of one of Cecil's prime birding gems with our own Parke John. At this time of year, the forest is starting to ring with the songs of newly arrived summer residents: Veery, Wood Thrush, Hooded, Worm-eating, and Black-and-white Warblers, Great Crested Flycatcher, and other goodies. Meet 7 AM at the SF parking lot off Irishtown Rd. Wear good shoes or boots for walking. Leader: Parke John, parke@del.net.

**H Frederick.** C&O Canal Walk. We will go from Point of Rocks to

Lander for migrating warblers. Be sure to do your neck exercises beforehand. Meet at Baker Park at 6:30 AM. Call Kathy Calvert at 301-698-1298 for further info.

**H Frederick.** Fred Archibald May Count. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Contact Bob Schaefer at 301-831-5660 or rjs30@erols.com for further info.

**H Harford.** Upper Gunpowder Delta. Catch some spring migrant action in a birdy site on the Baltimore/ Harford line. Possible tanagers, assorted warblers, sparrows, swallows, and some ducks and other water-dwellers. Park and meet at Midway Liquors on Rte 40 at 7:30 AM. Call Dave Ziolkowski at 443-299-8453 for more info.

**H Howard.** Western RP. Meet 8 AM at lot near pond off Carr's Mill Rd. Half day. Explore this newly developed park with a variety of habitats. Some paved roads will provide moderate walking, but be prepared to head onto grassy paths or trailblaze into field edge areas. Facilities available. Leader: Ralph Cullison, 410-442-2181.

**H Patuxent.** Fran Uhler NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. Call Fred Shaffer, 410-721-1744, for add'l info.

**H Patuxent.** Southern Prince George's County. This trip will cover a variety of habitats in search of migrants along the Patuxent River. Contact Fred Shaffer for add'l details and meeting location at 410-721-1744.

#### Sunday, May 4

**H Baltimore.** Patuxent North Tract (Research Refuge). Bring lunch for all-day trip for Summer Tanager, Blue Grosbeak, chat, and other southern specialty birds. Prothonotary Warbler possible. Meet 8 AM at the Nursery Rd P&R. Leader: Steve Sanford, 410-922-5103 or scartan@verizon.net.



**H Baltimore.** Cylburn Arboretum. Self-guided walk. Meet 8:30 AM at porch of mansion for easy birding without a designated leader. 4915 Greenspring Ave. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or [ilenel@juno.com](mailto:ilenel@juno.com).

**H Baltimore.** Spring Butterflies at Soldiers Delight. Join butterfly expert Dick Smith for a field trip at this globally rare ecosystem. (The park charges a \$2 per person fee for this event.) Meet 1 PM at Visitor/Nature Center. Cancelled if raining. See May 3 for directions. To verify that the trip is on and for more info, call the park at 410-461-5005.

**H Frederick.** Audrey Carroll May Count. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6 AM. Call Dave Smith at 410-549-7082 for further info.

**H Howard.** Birds and Wildflowers at Patuxent Branch. Meet 1:30 PM. Leaders: Bob and Jo Solem. Contact them at 301-725-5037 for specific meeting location.

**H Montgomery.** Little Bennett RP. Half day. Near peak migration for warblers and vireos, including those breeding in this varied habitat. For time, directions, and required reservations, contact leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

**H Talbot.** Ferry Neck. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Leader: Les Coble, 410-820-6165.

### Tuesday, May 6

**H Baltimore.** Lake Roland. First in a series of weekly walks to follow the progress of spring migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. Meet 8:30 AM at footbridge. From I-695, take Jones Falls Expy (I-83 south) to Northern Pkwy exit, and go left (east) to next light, Falls Rd. Go left (north) and stay in right lane, go past second light (Lake Ave), turn right (east) before south end of Falls Rd bridge (just north of Lake Ave), follow right-left-right turns to avoid Light Rail entrance, and go 0.5 mile to intersection. Park and

walk to footbridge. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or [whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com](mailto:whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com).

**MEETING. Baltimore.** Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. "Pale Male." Join us for a viewing of the fascinating documentary about the famous Red-tailed Hawk and his mate who set up home on a building ledge next to New York City's Central Park. Doors open at the Sherwood House at 7:30 PM for socializing and snacks; show starts about 7:45 or 8 PM.

### Wednesday, May 7

**H Baltimore.** First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in bad weather (rain, fog, etc). Meet 8 AM outside the Visitor Center. From I-95, take Exit 55/Hanover St. Turn right (east) on McComas St (last exit before tunnel eastbound, first after tunnel westbound). Go left (north) on Key Hwy and take first left onto Lawrence St; turn left onto Fort Ave and continue through gateway into the park. From the JFX/I-83, go south to St Paul St exit; St Paul becomes Light St; go left (east) onto Fort Ave and continue as above. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

**H Baltimore.** Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. Cancelled in rain, fog, etc. Park on Wallace St (left just before the gate). Meet 6 PM at the main gate. (For directions, see preceding entry.) Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

**MEETING. Carroll.** Mark Hoffman will administer "The Final Exam." 7:30 PM at Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Contact Bill Ellis at 443-520-8809 for more info.

**H Montgomery.** Exploring Calvert County. Three-quarters day. Local expert Sue Hamilton will show us around some of the county's hotspots. Meet at 7 AM at the entrance road to Flag Ponds. We'll later visit Battle Creek Cypress Swamp and other

sites. Reservations required. Limit 10. Call the coordinators for detailed directions and more info. Leader: Sue Hamilton. Coordinators: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252, and Linda Friedland, 301-983-2136.

### Thursday, May 8

**MEETING. Howard.** "Why Not Carry a Camera...?" by Michael Oberman. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731.

**H Montgomery.** Patuxent Drift Boat Trip, Prince George's County. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Songbirds; some marsh and water-birds. Meet Greg Kearns, park naturalist, at 6:30 AM at park entrance gate. Drift boat trip followed by hiking on trails and through marshes. Make reservations with Liz Jones at ANS, 301-652-9188, x30.

### Friday, May 9

**H Montgomery.** Pennyfield Lock: Birding by Ear. The emphasis is on listening, so tune up your ears for this half-day canal walk. Migrant and nesting landbirds. One-way walk to Violette's Lock with carpooling return a possibility. Meet 7 AM at the end of Pennyfield Lock Rd. Reservations required. For more info and reservations, call the Leaders: Cyndie Loeper, 301-530-8226, and Ann Lucy, 301-229-8810.

### Saturday, May 10

✿ **MAY COUNT. ALL COUNTIES.** See article and list of compilers on pages 9 and 11.

✿ **MAY COUNT. Carroll.** A Tally Rally will be hosted by Jerry and Laura Tarbell at their home. Contact Bill Ellis to coordinate count locations at 443-520-8809. RSVP to Jerry and Laura Tarbell, at 410-857-1109, if you will be attending the Tally. Please bring a \$ donation or a food item.



**MOS Calendar** (continued from page 17)

**H Baltimore.** Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scope can be useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, fog, etc.). See May 7 listing for directions. Meet outside the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

**H Montgomery.** Upper Watts Branch, Rockville. Half day. Migrant warblers, vireos, and thrushes, and assorted woodland residents, including possible Red-shouldered Hawks. Meet 7:30 AM at corner of Princeton Pl and Fordham St. Limit 12. Reservations required. Leader: Paul O'Brien, 301-424-6491.

**Saturday-Sunday, May 10-11**

**H Talbot.** Cape May for "Everything." Peak spring migration for warblers, passerines, shorebirds, and waders. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742. Some people will travel Fri to allow for full day of birding on Sat.

**Sunday, May 11**

**H Baltimore.** Milford Mill Park. For migrant warblers, thrushes, and other songbirds. Wilson's Warbler possible. Meet 7:30 AM on Milford Mill Rd. From I-695 Exit 18 (Liberty Rd), proceed west to first light at Washington Ave. Turn right, proceed to light on Milford Mill Rd, just after the overhead bridge. Leader: Bryce Butler, 410-728-0646 or capitano.bryce@verizon.net.

**H Baltimore.** Cylburn Nature Walk. See May 4 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

**H Harford.** Girls Gone Wildflower Reprised (special Mother's Day edition). For a good time, birds, flowers, and crazy spring fashions, meet leaders Sue Procell and Colleen Webster at Susquehanna SP. Come if you are a mother or have a mother! We expect a hilly walk but with plenty of birds and blossoms. Meet 7:30 AM at the gravel parking lot just off the end of Lapidum Rd across

from the canal and near the boat ramp parking lot. Call Colleen at 410-942-0867 for more info.

**Monday, May 12**

**H Baltimore.** Poplar Island. Poplar Is., an environmental restoration project similar to Hart-Miller, is reached by a 20-30 minute boat ride from Tilghman Is. Two-hour bus ride around Poplar Is., stopping wherever birding looks good. Meet 6:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R or meet 9 AM at Tilghman Is. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Bring snacks if desired. Lunch will be at a local restaurant. Reservations required. Leader: Robin Batcheller. Coordinator: Kevin Graff, whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

**Tuesday, May 13**

**H Baltimore.** Lake Roland. See May 6 listing for details. Leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Kent.** Speaker TBD. 7:30 PM. Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

**H Montgomery.** Rock Creek Park, DC. One-third day. Active time for migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area #18, one-half mile below the Nature Center on Ridge Rd. Call the leader for more info or specific directions. Reservations required. Leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** "Birding Ecuador" by *Bob Mumford*. Call Fred Shaffer at 410-721-1744 for add'l info. Meet 7:30 PM at the College Park Airport Annex.

**Wednesday, May 14**

**H Baltimore.** Evening Walks at Ft. McHenry. See May 7 listing for details. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church, Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For

info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

**H Howard.** Bon Secours Spiritual Center. Meet 8 AM at Visitor parking lot. Easy walking through the grounds of this spiritual retreat. Woods, fields, and hedgerows provide opportunities for a variety of birds. Facilities available. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057.

**H Montgomery.** Rugged Green Ridge SE, Allegany County. Full day. Meet 7 AM. Facilities are natural. Bring snacks, beverages, lunch, and insect repellent. Wear sturdy shoes; some hiking involved. 4-wheel drive or pickup truck recommended (but not necessary). Prior arrangements to carpool via leader highly suggested. Target birds include Ruffed Grouse, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and nesting vireos and warblers. Limit 12. Make reservations (required) by Sunday, May 11. Leader: Jim Green, 301-208-2393.

**Thursday, May 15**

**H Baltimore.** North Central Railroad Trail. We will visit a spot north of Monkton where migrants and nesters are (usually) easy to find. Minimal walking. Meet 8 AM. Reservations required. Limit 12. Contact the leader by May 14 for reservations, directions, and info. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or gt5s@bcpl.net.

MEETING. **Caroline.** Program TBA. 7:30 PM at the Caroline Co Public Library, Denton.

**Friday-Sunday, May 16-18**

**H Anne Arundel.** Magee Marsh and Other Sites in Ohio. Warblers, warblers, warblers! Contact leaders, Tom and Sharon Bradford, at 410-987-0674 for more details. Must make reservations by May 11.

**H Frederick.** Crane Creek Weekend. If you've never been to Magee Marsh in Crane Creek SP on the shores of Lake Erie in OH, you have missed an incredible spectacle of migrating warblers. So many birds to see

without breaking your neck. Lois Kauffman will lead us to this fantastic hotspot. For those wishing to venture further, this is a good jumping-off point to visit the Kirtland's Warbler breeding area in Michigan. Call Lois at 301-845-6690 for more info.

### Saturday, May 17

**H Baltimore.** Hampton National Historic Site. See May 3 listing for directions. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM at farmhouse parking lot. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

**H Baltimore.** DE Bay. Full-day trip for a wide variety of migrating shorebirds. Possible spectacular assemblage of breeding-plumage turnstones, Sanderlings, and Red Knots. Curlew Sandpiper possible. Be prepared for possible heat and biting insects. Minimal walking involved. Scopes very useful. Bring a lunch. Meet 7 AM at Nursery Rd P&R, I-695, Exit 8. Alternatively, meet 9 AM at the Bombay Hook Visitor Center lot. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete\_webb@juno.com.

**H Cecil.** Woodlawn Wildlife Area. Woodlawn is a restored landfill located in western Cecil Co. The Cecil Bird Club is partnering with Woodlawn to promote use of the area for birding and nature observation. Join us for a leisurely stroll around the fields and woods of this re-awakening natural area. Meet 7 AM at the Woodlawn parking area for a half-day. Leader: Richard Donham, donhamr@zoominternet.net.

**H Harford.** Shorebird Banding. Join genius bander Mark Johnson as he nets more than a few migrating shorebirds at the ponds at Swan Harbor Farms. For an added bonus, bring your own picnic (we supply the grill) and enjoy yourself from 7 AM until 1 PM. Good camaraderie, food, and many close-up looks at your favorite shorebirds. For more info, call Mark at 410-692-5978.

**BIG DAY. Howard.** All-day listing extravaganza! Limit 12. Plan to spend the day hiking around the county in search of as many species as possible. All types of footwear needed. Bring food and drinks. Facilities in some spots. Call Bonnie Ott to sign up at 410-461-3361.

**H Kent.** Heron Point. Two hours. Meet 8 AM in the main parking lot for a leisurely walk along the Chester River waterfront and wooded edges around the Heron Point community. For info, contact Nancy Martin and Walter Ellison at 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

**H Patuxent.** Governor Bridge NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. Call Fred Shaffer, 410-721-1744, for add'l info.

### Sunday, May 18

**H Baltimore.** Owings Mills Mall Wetland. Willow Flycatcher, Green Heron, Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Orchard Oriole are just a few of the birds that breed in and around this mall's wetland area. Meet 7:30 AM at lot across from the gas station on Red Run Blvd. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

**H Baltimore.** Cylburn Nature Walk. See May 4 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

**H Howard.** Patapsco Shrubland. Meet 7:30 AM at 735 River Rd (1 mile from either end of River Rd). Half day. Moderate to possibly difficult walking. We'll start in the shrubland to look for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other edge species. Depending on conditions, we may continue into the woods. The trails are steep, with several stream crossings, so bring appropriate footwear. Facilities available. Leader: Felicia Lovelett, 410-489-7169.

**H Talbot.** Pocomoke Swamp Area. Resident and migrant songbirds with a focus on warblers. Red-headed Woodpeckers, nesting Red-shouldered Hawks, both tanagers and a nice variety of goodies are usually seen as well. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-822-8132. Bring lunch. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM. Return late afternoon.

**H Tri-County.** Bombay Hook NWR and other DE Bay Sites. Migrating shorebirds. Meet 7 AM at Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497, for directions and more details. Note earlier start time.

### Monday, May 19

MEETING. **Tri-County.** "Australia: Birding Down Under" by Jean and Larry Fry. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

### Tuesday, May 20

**H Baltimore.** Lake Roland. See May 6 listing for details. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net.

### Wednesday, May 21

**H Baltimore.** Evening Walks at Ft. McHenry. See May 7 listing for details. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

MEETING. **Montgomery.** Election of officers. Then, "Birds of Kenya and Tanzania" by Ed Patten, MBC. In December 2006, Ed and his wife explored Amboseli National Park, Ngorongoro Crater (where they spent Christmas), and the Serengeti plains, then spent another week in Nairobi. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

### Friday, May 23

**H Baltimore.** Whip-poor-wills at Soldiers Delight. 8 PM. Come and assist with our annual count of calling "whips" at the best site for this species in Baltimore Co. We will end by 10:15 PM. For directions, see May 3 listing. Leader: David Curson, 410-675-4963.



**MOS Calendar** (continued from page 19)**Saturday, May 24**

**H Baltimore.** Hampton National Historic Site. See May 3 listing for directions. Automatically cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM at farmhouse parking lot. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

**H Cecil.** Birding by Kayak. Explore the waters of the Elkton marshes with Parke John. This is a good way to search for rails and shorebirds as well as terns during the high point of the migration season. Meet 6 AM at Brownie's Shore, off Old Field Point Rd. Bring your own kayak and paddle. Also, of course, bring and wear a life preserver. Leader: Parke John, parke@del.net.

**H Frederick.** Gambrill SP. Barbara Gearhart will lead us to all the good spots in Gambrill for spring migrants and other goodies. Walking may be uphill and vigorous depending on where the warblers are. Meet at Gambrill SP parking lot at 8 AM. Reservations required. Contact Barbara at 301-473-9889 for more info and to make reservations.

**H Harford.** Susquehanna SP, Davis Tract. For a look at Yellow- and Black-billed Cuckoos, Olive-sided and Empidonax Flycatchers, Cape May and Cerulean Warblers, with zebra swallowtails a possibility, too. Meet leader Les Eastman at the Level Firehouse parking lot at 6:30 AM. For more info, call Les at 410-734-6969.

**H Montgomery and Howard.** Hot Spots for Red Knots. Full day. Joint club trip. We will start at 8:30 AM at the visitor center for Prime Hook NWR and work our way north along Delaware Bay, including a stop at the new nature center at Mispillion Light. We will go until dark or exhaustion, whichever comes first. Bring binos, scope, food, water, sunscreen, and loads of insect repellent. Trip is limited to 12 persons/3 vehicles per chapter. Reservations required. Kurt Schwarz will co-lead for Howard Co, krschwa1@comcast.net or 410-461-1643. For reservations and info, contact co-leader, Cyndie Loeper at

cyndieloeper@comcast.net or 301-535-8584.

**Sunday, May 25**

**H Anne Arundel.** Delaware Bay. Horseshoe crabs, shorebirds, and gulls. Bring lunch; dinner on the way home. Meet 7:45 AM at Bay 50 Shopping Center, just off Rte 50. Leader: Gerald Winegrad, 410-280-8956.

**H Howard.** Rockburn Branch Park. Half day. Meet 8 AM in parking lot on the left just past the restored schoolhouse. Moderate but lengthy walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park. Paths may be muddy. Facilities available. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

**H Talbot and Caroline.** Young Birders' Habitat Competition, Adkins Arboretum. Elementary, middle, and high school birders at all skill levels will be grouped into two teams, which will vie to identify the most spring migrants and breeding species in woodland vs grassland/scrub habitats at the arboretum. (From previous competitions, the two habitats are tied at one win each.) For extra points, each team is challenged to see as many as possible of 10 "must see" species, which range from easy to difficult to find. Dedication of new Tuckahoe Creek Important Bird Area to follow compilation of results. Leaders: Dave Palmer, 410-820-4707, and Wayne Bell. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

**Monday, May 26**

**H Harford.** Hidden Valley/Upper Deer Creek. Join local resident and natural historian Dennis Kirkwood in a search for Worm-eating Warbler, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, and Scarlet Tanager. Meet at Hidden Valley (N end of Madonna Rd) at 7 AM. A side trip to the Bradenbaugh Flats will bring Grasshopper Sparrow and Willow Flycatcher. Contact Dennis Kirkwood at 410-692-5905 for more info.

**Tuesday, May 27**

**H Baltimore.** Lake Roland. See May 6 listing for trip details. Leader: Patsy Perlman, 466-3998 or pattonyp@juno.com.

MEETING. **Washington.** Nature photographer Wil Hershberger will present "Bird Photography in the Digital Age." 7:30 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call 301-797-8454 for info.

**Wednesday, May 28**

**H Baltimore.** Evening walks at Ft. McHenry. See May 7 listing for details. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

**Friday-Sunday, May 30-June 1**

MOS ANNUAL CONFERENCE. Radisson Conference Center, Edgewood, Harford Co. For information, contact MOS Secretary Janet Shields, 301-733-7877 or janetbill@prodigy.net.

**Saturday, May 31**

**H Tri-County.** Truitt's Landing. Late afternoon trip for rails, owls, Chuck-will's-widow, and marsh sparrows. Meet 4 PM Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497, for directions and more details.

**Wednesday, June 4**

MEETING. **Carroll.** Dorothy Kenny will present "Studies of CO1 Genes to Elucidate Relationships in Orioles." 7:30 PM at Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Contact Bill Ellis at 443-520-8809 for more info.

**Thursday, June 5**

ANNUAL PICNIC AT LILYPONS. **Frederick.** Bring binoculars, a dish to share, plate, drink, and utensils. We'll meet at 6 PM for birding and eats.

FALL PLANNING MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER. **Talbot.** Bring ideas for fall 2008 season and a covered dish, salad, or dessert. Contact hosts, Karen and Bill Harris, 410-770-8303 for start time.



**Friday-Sunday, June 6-8**

**CAREY RUN WORKDAYS.** Volunteers needed to assist Dave Brinker's Boy Scouts, who will be removing autumn olive sprouts at the MOS sanctuary in Garrett Co. For information, contact Brent Byers, 410-686-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

**Saturday, June 7**

**H Cecil.** Ocean City and Assateague. Full day. A summertime trip to find waders and shorebirds down at the ocean. Meet 6 AM near Dunkin' Donuts at Big Elk Mall. Bring breakfast, lunch, and snack, or money to buy take-out food on the way. Dress for a long day in the sun. Pack plenty of sunscreen. Bring scope if you have one. Easy walking. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

**H Frederick.** Western Maryland. Mike Welch will lead us to some hotspots in western MD to look for some of the local breeders, including Least and Alder Flycatchers, Golden-winged and lots of other warblers, and Henslow's Sparrow. Meet at the MD 66 P&R just north of I-70, east of Hagerstown at 6 AM. Call Mike at 301-874-5828 for info.

**H Harford.** Post-Conference Rarity Round-Up. A trip so elite and sophisticated, all we can tell you is that the leaders are Dave Z and Randy Robertson! Meeting place TBD, but start time is 7 AM. Call Randy at 410-273-9029 for more info.

**H Patuxent.** Fran Uhler NA. Tentative date for annual cleanup. Check the PGAS website (www.pgaudubon.org) for the latest info. Meet at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required.

**Sunday, June 8**

**H Baltimore.** Soldiers Delight for Nesting Birds. Possible Summer and Scarlet Tanagers, Yellow-breasted Chat, White-eyed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Field Sparrow, as well as Hooded, Prairie, and Pine

Warblers. Meet 7:30 AM. See May 3 listing for directions. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6849 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

**ANNUAL CLUB PICNIC. Kent.** 5 PM. Join us for a potluck picnic at the lodge at Eastern Neck NWR. Contact Nancy Martin/Walter Ellison at 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net for more details.

**H Montgomery.** Woodpecker Alley: North Branch of Rock Creek. Half day. Nesting woodpeckers and other woodland birds. Meet at Swim Center parking lot of Olney Manor Recreational Park on right-hand (east) side of Georgia Ave, opposite Emory Ln, promptly at 7 AM, and car pool from there. Reservations required. Limit 10. Leader: John Williamson, jwilliamson12@yahoo.com or 301-654-5312.

**Tuesday, June 10**

**ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING. Allegany.** 7 PM at Carey Run Sanctuary. We'll be deciding about the schedule for next year, so bring your ideas for speakers, field trips, and other projects. For info, contact Barbara Gaffney, gaffneyg@mindspring.com.

**MEETING. Patuxent.** Members' Night (digital slides, discussion of books, optics, or digital equipment). Coordinated by Fred Shaffer. Also PBC business meeting and elections. Call Fred at 410-721-1744 for add'l info. Meet 7:30 PM at the College Park Airport Annex.

**Wednesday, June 11**

**MEETING. Cecil.** Business meeting and general social. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church, Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

**Thursday, June 12**

**CHAPTER PLANNING MEETING. Frederick.** Everyone please come to our 2008-2009 planning meeting and volunteer to give a program or lead a field trip. We need new ideas and suggestions. 7 PM at Mike Welch's

house. Call Mike at 301-874-5828 for info and directions.

**Saturday, June 14**

**MOS BOARD MEETING.** Colchester Farm, Kent County. Hosted by Cecil County Bird Club. For add'l info, contact Janet Shields, MOS Secretary, at janetbill@prodigy.net.

**H Baltimore.** Field Birds of Carroll and/or and Frederick Counties. Full day. Looking for nesting Vesper, Grasshopper, Field, and possible Savannah Sparrows, Bobolink, Dickcissel, Horned Lark, meadowlark, Willow Flycatcher, and Red-headed Woodpecker. Bring lunch. Rain date: June 28. Meet 7:30 AM at P&R lot, extreme east end of I-70 (inside I-695). From I-695, take I-70 exit east, "local," NOT the Security Blvd exit, to lot at end of I-70 (inside I-695, west of city). Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete\_webb@juno.com.

**H Howard.** Dragonfly Walk at Mt. Pleasant. Meet 10 AM in front of Gudelsky Nature Center, one-half mile east of Woodstock Rd on MD 99, to search for early summer dragonflies over the meadows and wetlands of this large property. Mown trails. Co-sponsored with the Howard Conservancy. Leaders: Bob and Jo Solem, 301-725-5037.

**Thursday, June 19**

**H Montgomery.** Banding at Adventure. Half day. Joint ANS/MBC trip. Licensed Bander Gemma Radko will demonstrate the techniques of netting and banding birds at Adventure Banding Station on Glen Rd, Potomac. A great opportunity to see familiar birds up close and personal! For reservations (required), directions, and starting time, call the leader. Leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894

**Saturday, June 21**

**H Baltimore.** Patapsco Valley SP, Granite Area. Nesting Birds. Blue-winged, Prairie, Pine Warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chat are among the 6 confirmed (11 possible) breeding

(MOS Calendar continues on page 22)

warblers in the area. Boots recommended. From I-695 Exit 18, take Liberty Rd (MD 26) west for 2 miles to Old Court Rd (MD 125). Turn left on Old Court Rd and drive 5.5 miles through Granite to the Patapsco River. Park on the lane in the cemetery just after the Job Corps signs. Leader: Keith Eric Costley, 443-985-6489 or oriolekec1@comcast.net.

**H Harford.** Fort McHenry Western Kingbird Search. Celebrate the official beginning of summer by trekking down to catch a glimpse of the Western Kingbird lurking along the shoreline of the Harbor. Meet leader Mike Burchette at the Rte 152/I-95 P&R at 7 AM; for more info, call him at 443-243-6023.

#### Sunday, June 22

**PICNIC. Washington.** 4 PM at Camp Harding. Bring your own plate, utensils, drink, lawn chair, and a dish to share. Call 301-797-8454 for directions.

#### Saturday, June 28

**H Harford.** Secretive Marshbirds. This is your opportunity to hear and see some of those shy rails, Least Bitterns, and other camouflaged birds that squirrel away in the ponds at Swan Harbor Farm. Meet leaders Tom Gibson and John Gallo at the Swan Harbor parking lot at 7:30 PM and call Tom at 410-734-4135 for more info.

#### Wednesday, July 9

**MEETING. Cecil.** Program TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church, Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

#### Thursday, July 10

**H Howard.** Baltimore Checkerspot Wetlands. Meet at Lisbon P&R on Rte 94. Visit three Montgomery Co locations where turtlehead has been planted and baltimore checkerspot caterpillars have been located. Learn about efforts to save our state butterfly. Rain date July 17. Limit 15. There will be a van from Black Hill

RP that holds eleven. First signups may travel in the van. Limited facilities. Contact Kate Tufts for meeting time and to sign up at 410-489-7052 or ktufts@verizon.net.

#### Friday, July 18

**SUMMER SOCIAL AND MEETING.**

**Harford.** Join us at the lovely Anita C. Leight Estuary Center for our popular wine and cheese social followed by a talk by *Jean and Dennis Kirkwood*. All who wish can show up 30-40 minutes early for an impromptu bird walk on the trail or along the shore. Call Colleen Webster at 410-942-0867 for start time and more info.

#### Saturday, July 19

**H Cecil.** Summer at Fair Hill. Part of our "Seasons at Fair Hill" series. Summer means specialty breeding birds: Scarlet Tanager, Veery, Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-winged Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Bobolinks, and more. Of course, the scenery at Fair Hill can't be beat—lush woods, rolling hills, extensive hayfields, and crystal-clear streams. Be prepared for a longish hike over trails that are narrow and may be steep and muddy in places. Meet 8 AM at the Covered Bridge parking lot at Fair Hill. Parking fee required. Honor system in use; bring small bills to pay fee (\$3 MD residents, \$4 out-of-state visitors). Wear sturdy walking shoes or boots. Leader: Richard Donham, donhamr@zoominternet.net.

#### Saturday, July 26

**H Harford.** Hart-Miller Island. Learn from the master as Gene Scarpulla leads you on a journey to one of the premier birding hotspots in MD. Summer specialties at Hart-Miller include Common Moorhen, Peregrine Falcon, and a spectacular assortment of herons, terns, and shorebirds. Participants will take a boat out to HMI at 7 AM and not leave the island until 5 PM. The day will be spent hiking 6-8 miles, with rest rooms and water available at only one location. Insect repellent, sunscreen, a spotting scope, appropriate clothing, and a supply of water/food are all necessary.

This all-day excursion is not a trip to be taken lightly, but the rewards can be unforgettable. Space is limited. Call Dave Webb at 410-939-3537 to register and obtain rendezvous info.

#### Saturday, August 2

**H Harford.** Stream Cleanup, Summer Picnic, and Birding. What a combo! Join us for a unique, fun, wet, and worthwhile field experience. We will be giving back to the environment and community by cleaning up a stretch of one of our favorite birding streams (specific site TBA). This first-time event will start at 10 AM, with a break for a picnic lunch at 12:30 PM, and wrap up around 3:30 PM or whenever the job is done. Bring an outfit you don't mind getting wet and dirty, and work gloves; remember your binos and a picnic lunch and drinks for the day. Call or e-mail Tom Gibson for further details or to confirm your participation at 410-734-4135 or gibsonltd@aol.com. Last-minute participants welcome.

#### Monday, August 11

**H Baltimore.** Poplar Island. See May 12 listing. Leader: Robin Batcheller. Coordinator: Kevin Graff, whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

#### Wednesday, August 13

**MEETING. Cecil.** *Jim White* presents "Reptiles of Delmarva." 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church, Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

#### Saturday, August 16

**H Baltimore.** DE Bay. Full-day trip for herons and a wide variety of migrating shorebirds, including avocets. Be prepared for possible heat and biting insects. Minimal walking involved. Scopes very useful. Bring a lunch. Meet 7 AM at Nursery Rd P&R, I-695 Exit 8. Alternatively, meet 9:30 AM at the Bombay Hook Visitor Center lot. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete\_webb@juno.com.

**H** Indicates Field Trip



**H Harford.** Shorebird Rarity Chase at Bombay Hook. Join Dennis Kirkwood on a three-quarters-day adventure to this birding mega-hotspot for shorebirds and rarities. Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Stilt Sandpiper, and Wilson's Phalarope top the list of regular fall highlights, but that's not all, as this is also a great time to pick up seaward strays and western vagrants. Bring sunscreen, insect repellent, and lunch. Scopes helpful but not necessary. Meet 7 AM at the MD 155 and I-95 P&R. Contact Dennis at 410-692-5905 for further info.

### Saturday, August 23

**H Cecil.** Turkey Point Fall Migrants. Turkey Point is a premier fall migrant trap. Some of the small landbirds start their fall migration in August, and this trip will scour the woods and fields at Turkey Point for migrating warblers,

flycatchers, vireos, etc. Be prepared for a round-trip hike to the Point, a distance of about two miles. The pace will be leisurely. Most of the walking is on a gravel road with good footing, but there are hilly sections. Wear comfortable walking shoes/boots. Bring drinks and/or snacks. Meet 7 AM at the Turkey Point parking lot. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

### Saturday, August 23

**H Harford.** Butterflies and Dragonflies of Harford County. Join Rick Cheicante for this very leisurely half-day foray to one of Harford Co's butterfly and dragonfly haunts. Butterflies may include the showy swallowtails, monarch, and viceroy as well as diminutive hairstreaks and challenging grass skippers. Odonate hopefuls include common green darner, eastern pondhawk, black saddlebags, and halloween pennant.

Contact Rick Cheicante at 410-803-2712 for all the details. Sunny day only!

### Saturday-Sunday, August 23-24

**H Montgomery.** Bombay Hook and Vicinity. This is a terrific time of year to study adult and juvenile shorebirds, with the possibility of a large number of species. Lunch will be in the field both days, dinner at a local restaurant. Make hotel reservations in advance. Bring plenty of water, insect repellent, hat, sunscreen, and snacks. Co-leaders: Cyndie Loeper and Frank Witebsky. Contact Cyndie, 301-530-8226 or cyndieloeper@comcast.net, for reservations and meeting time.

### Sunday, August 24

**PICNIC. Washington.** 4 PM at Washington Monument SP. Bring your own plate, utensils, drink, lawn chair, and a dish to share. Call 301-797-8454 for directions.

## The Flight of the Red Knot\*

The *rufa* subspecies of the Red Knot, which stops off in Delaware Bay to rebuild its strength after flying direct from South America, in preparation for its next non-stop leg to the Canadian Arctic, continues to decline. A major reason is the continued harvest of the horseshoe crab, a prehistoric arthropod that comes ashore to lay billions of eggs at the end of May, just as the shorebirds arrive needing sustenance.

The states of Delaware and New Jersey have attempted to at least temporarily halt the harvest of the horseshoe crab in Delaware Bay, but Delaware's three-year ban was thrown out in court last year. The New Jersey ban was recently also overturned by the state's Marine Fisheries Council. Fortunately, the New Jersey legislature has passed a harvest ban and the Governor signed the bill into law on March 25.

Nevertheless, the states' abilities to act can be constrained. In light of that, as well as Federal inaction, the private sector can step in and, indeed, has. The Delmarva Ornithological Society is conducting its second Bird-A-Thon this May to raise funds to purchase bayshore, putting it off-limits to the horseshoe crab harvest. Last year the DOS raised over \$28,000 and purchased seven acres. The goal this year is \$40,000. You can aid this effort by pledging to a team,



Photo of Red Knots courtesy of Kurt Schwarz.

forming your own team, or just sending in a check for any amount you can spare. The Howard County Bird Club will be donating \$1,300 of the proceeds from last fall's seed sale to the effort.

Details are available at <http://www.dosbirds.org/bird-a-thon/index.html>. Checks can be made out to "DOS/Bird-A-Thon" and sent to: DOS, PO Box 4247, Greenville, DE 19807.

—Kurt Schwarz

\*With apologies to Brian Harrington, author of *The Flight of the Red Knot*, 1996.

Did you know? Delaware Bay is the center of the Western Hemisphere's only population of horseshoe crabs. Horseshoe crab eggs, unlike any other food resource, are quickly metabolized into fat, which allows Red Knots and other shorebirds to double their body weight in a brief period of about two to three weeks. This weight gain is critical for survival because the Delaware Bay is the last stop before Red Knots reach still-frozen arctic breeding grounds, where it takes one to three weeks for insect food to become available.

## BOOK REVIEW

***Rhapsody in Blue: A Celebration of North American Waterbirds*, Photography by Middleton Evans. • Ravenwood Press, 2007.**

272 pages, 320 color photographs. (Hardcover \$60.)



If the stunning photo of the Black Skimmer on the cover of this wonderful portfolio of waterbirds doesn't immediately capture your attention, the 320 color photos inside undoubtedly will!

After a remarkable trip to Florida in 1998, Middleton Evans was inspired to embark on this five-year mission to photograph as many of North America's waterbirds as he could in their natural

habitats. Evans describes the project as "37 major trips, four countries, five years, 185 species photographed, 200,000 slides, many sore backs, mucho dinero. . . and memories to last a lifetime." *Rhapsody in Blue* is a grand testament to Evan's excellent adventure.

Certainly large enough to be classified as a "coffee table" book, *Rhapsody in Blue* is not just a random collection of nice bird photography. To this reviewer, the most fascinating element of any great photograph is the story behind the picture, and the stories that Evans tells are both amusing and inspirational. In the 10-page introduction, Evans tells the tale of how this book came to be. He provides interesting anecdotes about his photographic forays—sharing both his pitfalls as well as his many successes. It is well written and worth the read, and sets the tone for the rest of the book.

*Rhapsody in Blue* is divided into six chapters, each being a collection of photographs focused on a select theme. For example, the chapter entitled "Three Square Meals" contains some astounding pictures of birds either contemplating their next meal or completing the one in progress.

Even if the reader skips the introduction, it is quite evident that Evans spent a lot of time and patience pursuing his subjects. Many of the photographs are once-in-a-lifetime shots. Some of the pictures are very poignant—for example, the photo of a Western Gull practically beak-to-nose with a newborn elephant seal pup. In the caption, Evans explains that the gulls come to feed on the placenta left behind from the birthing process. This is just one example of how Evans brings together the awe-inspiring beauty of nature with the practical side of science. Evans gives the reader an exhilarating look at the life of birds, as well as an appreciation of their behavior and why we need to preserve the world in which they live.

In the 25-page appendix, Evans goes the extra mile for his readers. In "Photography Notes," he shares information about each photo in the book. For easy reference, this section contains thumbnails of each photograph, arranged in the order of appearance in the book. Next to each photograph is the name of the bird(s), the location of the shot, and camera notes. Evans also provides a brief description of the circumstances in which the photo was taken. As previously note—it's that "snapshot" of the story behind the picture.

To see a preview of *Rhapsody in Blue* online, visit [www.ravenwoodpress.com](http://www.ravenwoodpress.com).

—Suzanne Probst  
Howard County Bird Club

[Ed. note: An autographed copy of *Rhapsody in Blue* will be one of the raffle prizes at the MOS conference.]

**POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!**

## LAST CALL

...for **Chapter and Committee annual reports**. Submit them to MOS President Marcia Balestri ([mebalestri@comcast.net](mailto:mebalestri@comcast.net)) by May 15.

...for **Research Proposals**. Grants (generally no more than \$2,000) are available for ornithological research in the state of Maryland. Applications are due by June 1. Notification of awards will be made in about 8 weeks. For info, contact David Ziolkowski, [dziolkowski@usgs.gov](mailto:dziolkowski@usgs.gov), 301-497-5753.

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Cylburn Mansion  
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